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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

MARCH 20, 1981

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The African rediscovery of Africa

By Roland Oliver

UNESCO General History of Africa
Volume I: Methodology and African Prehistory
Edited by J. Ki-Zerbo
819pp, £13.50.
0 435 94803 9
Volume II: Ancient Civilisations of Africa
Edited by G. Mokhtar
814pp, £13.50.
0 435 94805 9
Hermann Educational.

Thirty years ago it was the general opinion that there could be no such thing as African history. Arnold Toynbee had recently said so: where there had been no change there could be no historical process. By 1963 things had changed so far that two British universities had created Chairs in this subject. But the Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford still treated with scorn the idea that history should concern itself with the "unrewarding gyrations of barbarous tribes in picturesque but irrelevant corners of the globe". Perhaps, from the banks of the Cam, he does so still. Nevertheless the old Cam had a long way to go. The history of the continent is progressing side by side, accompanied by the Cambridge University Press, the other by UNESCO. Although Cambridge began to take soundings as early as the 1950s, the first public declaration of interest was that by UNESCO, whose representative announced at the inaugural meeting of the International Congress of African Studies at Accra in 1961 that his organization would be willing to sponsor a work on Africa as a sequel to UNESCO's *General History of Mankind*. First steps were slow, but preparatory studies began in 1965, and certainly the Cambridge University Press, which took its big decision in 1967, was well aware of the competition into which it was entering.

Each scheme envisaged a major collaborative work in eight volumes, beginning with the origins of man and continuing till the present day. The UNESCO project, though genuinely scientific, had a large political objective - to "decolonize" African history, and to reinforce the self-respect of the newly independent continent by enabling it to present its past to the world as far as possible through the words of African scholars, and for the rest by foreign scholars selected and controlled by African volume editors and accountable to an International Scientific Committee. With a built-in African majority. By its origins and through its supporting constituency the UNESCO history had to be seen as mainly the work of insiders. The Syndicate of the Cambridge University Press were warned from the first by their chosen General Editors that their work would inevitably be predominantly an affair of outsiders. Given the great upsurge of interest in Africa in the world at large, it seemed likely that there would be room for both approaches.

The Cambridge history began publication in 1975. Four of the eight volumes have now appeared and two more have been for some time in the press. Five years later, and following the expenditure of something like two million dollars of international taxpayer's money, the UNESCO series has at last produced its first two volumes. There are some serious reasons for both the delay and the expense, and the best of them relate to the political aspects of the enterprise. To be seen as an African initiative. It was necessary for most African countries to be involved, not in one way then in another. There were indeed some African historians of international repute, but they were few, and they came from a mere handful of African countries. Of sixty-two authors involved in the first two volumes, only nineteen in fact are Africans, and they represent only nine African countries. Much of the political credibility has therefore turned upon the International Scientific Committee, with its twenty-five African members as against thirteen outsiders. Of the former, only about ten enjoyed any wide reputation as historians. The rest were just national representatives - professors of universities, professors of education and so forth. It was brought alive, they needed to be gathered together regularly over many years, at a huge expense, in well-publicized colloquia in African capitals from Addis Ababa to Lusaka. In theory at least every synopsis of a volume and every draft chapter had to pass the scrutiny of this grand committee. Then there were the expenses of bilingual publication in French and English, while Colonel Fage and Philip Curtin can be disappointing. If only because they have done it so often before, although, in the same category, Jan Vansina has contributed a characteristically brilliant and largely new formulation of the methodology of oral tradition. Again, the six chapters on related disciplines - archaeology, geography and linguistics - are the most part too general to make clear the extent and the limitations of their usefulness for historians. The most refreshing price subsidy, as distinct from background costs, is a legitimate weapon of the UNESCO armory. There are said to be full translations in prospect for ten other languages - five African and five non-African - and also "abridged editions designed for a wide African and international public". The international taxpayer has evidently much further expenditure still to underwrite.

This said, the UNESCO first-fruits should be acclaimed as a real contribution to scholarship. The chapters are one third of the length, and three times as numerous, as those of the Cambridge history. There is a correspondingly wider range of authors, and even if a large majority of them are still non-Africans, there is a notable and welcome change in the balance of the work.

The publishers have been subsidized to produce the volumes at approximately one half of their real cost and one-third of the price which a commercial publisher would need to charge. For the purchaser the UNESCO history is a snip, and welcome as it will be, one must wonder whether direct price subsidy, as distinct from background costs, is a legitimate weapon of the UNESCO armory. There are said to be full translations in prospect for ten other languages - five African and five non-African - and also "abridged editions designed for a wide African and international public". The international taxpayer has evidently much further expenditure still to underwrite.

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The second volume, running from the beginnings of food production until the seventh century, is on the whole more satisfactory than the first. The main source of trouble here is the title - "Ancient Civilisations of Africa" - which throws the accent far too heavily on the north-east. Twelve chapters deal with Egypt and Nubia, four with Aksum and four more with North Africa and the Sahara. There leaves nine for the rest of the continent. The main thing about Egypt in African history is that Ancient Egypt flourished and died while the

to compare the course of human development within the continent and outside. Come the New Stone Age, and the last twenty to thirty thousand years, some kind of regional breakdown was almost inevitable, although three geographical units might have been preferable to seven. One suspects that the sevenfold division was more a problem of participation between competing experts than of the requirements of the subject-matter.

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This primitive but arresting picture of Abba Samuel, Ethiopian saint of the Woldaba monastery, sedately astride a lion, rapt in hand, halo on head, is taken from Volume XLII, Number 1 of *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* (subscription \$15, single numbers \$5) which includes an article by Ephraim Isaac on "The Princeton Collection of Ethiopian Manuscripts". The elaborate shape of Samuel's crucifix reflects the use in Ethiopia of the cross as the basis for intricate art objects. The cross is found in a variety of forms in the magical illuminations of the scrolls sometimes incorporating Ethiopian and African motifs. It was regarded in the early church as a seal against evil and making the sign of the cross on different parts of the body protected its occupant from malevolent forces. Magical symbols, words and phrases and secret names were also used to ward off demons and evil spirits, and the scrolls contain such devices as an acrostic arrangement of Solomon's name in the proper names of the "Isles of Solomon". According to legend Solomon caught demons like fish in a net by reciting his magical incantation.

come contingent of Francophone contributors, and even a scatter of East Europeans, to contrast with the heavy Anglo-American bias of the corresponding Cambridge volumes. Inevitably, the multitude of short chapters has led to overlaps and contradictions, as well as to considerable unevenness in quality, but of sixty-two contributors there is only one who is a total non-sensationalist. This is a chapter by a Senegalese museum director, Cheikh Anta Diop, who has made a life-long hobby of the thesis that the Ancient Egyptians were black. Edward Wilmott Blyden held the same view, but that was more than a century ago. Most of us have now got used to the idea that all mankind, including even the Trevars and the Ropers, are of African origin, and that we are provided with approximately the amount of melanin that our recent ancestors required in order to survive most easily in the degree of latitude in which it pleased God to place them. Broadly speaking, a lower Nile environment requires less melanin than one higher up the river; but since ancient Egypt was an important of slaves and concubines, and since it is easier to cross Saharan latitudes by the Nile valley than by any other route, the presence of "southern" features at all levels of Egyptian society is hardly surprising. It is a tribute to the force of Diop's personality that the editors have printed his chapter even at the cost of following it with an equivalent amount of small print pointing out that he may well be quite wrong. Most students, however, will find the effect more mystifying than helpful.

Diop's apart, all the other contributions are serious, and the worst failures are the "southern" ones: of planning rather than evolution and life-style; set against the broadest outline of changing climatic and ecological conditions. Relocated to the opening pages of seven successive regional surveys, no intelligible picture emerges of the transition from autochthonous to homo sapiens, which is what most people really need to know. Nor is there the slightest attempt to depict the colonization of Africa of the rest of the Old World or

ric and deeply significant process have been revealed, whereby Stone Age food production had its remote origins on the Nubian stretch of the Nile, was picked up and carried forward almost simultaneously on both the northern and the southern fringes of the desert zone, spread from there to the fringes of the equatorial forest, and eventually into the forest and through it, before being overtaken by an Iron Age technology expanding more rapidly from north to south. On the whole it must be said that the broad lines of this process do not show up at all clearly through the closing chapters of the second UNESCO volume. There is a very distinguished contribution by John Sutton, which achieves an original and completely satisfactory synthesis of the East African evidence from the first appearance of pastoralism in northern Kenya in the third millennium BC to the establishment of early Iron Age communities all over the region during the first millennium AD. There are well-known names among the other authors in this section - Phillipson, Panossian, Van Noten, Verin - but they write as archaeologists addressing other archaeologists, and too often they are summarizing their own past work rather than seeking to achieve wider and more comprehensive horizons.

When the Cambridge project was launched in competition with the UNESCO one, in 1967, it seemed to be quite on the cards that there might prove to be significant ideological and historiographical divergences between the two series. If the first two volumes are any guide, these anticipations were quite groundless. The UNESCO volumes have more and shorter chapters. They deploy more authors, recruited from more countries. But the style of authorship is not noticeably different. There are only a handful of the UNESCO authors whom the Cambridge editors would not have been happy to enlist. It may be that when the two series come closer to modern times some more significant differences may emerge, but looking at the volume titles of the two series as a whole, the periodization, at least, seems very close. The main difference is that the UNESCO plan provides for two volumes on the medieval period against Cambridge's one. This presumably means that UNESCO will give a fuller, and therefore a more unbalanced treatment of the history of Egypt and North Africa, corresponding to that already manifest in the second volume. This difference in medieval history is compensated in the treatment of the colonial period, where UNESCO gives only a volume and a half against Cambridge's two and a half. Whereas one might have thought that the proper castigation of colonialism might require additional space, the tendency has in fact been towards structural annexation. This coincides with the recent trend of historical education in Africa, in which the colonial influence is not so much attacked as ignored. The colonial period, which in so many ways gave modern Africa its present shape, is treated as an almost irrelevant interlude. This is a dangerous distortion.

At the end of the day students in Institutions affluent enough to own both series will be advised to read the best items from each and to ignore the rest. The private bookbuyer will have a narrower choice, and will inevitably prefer the subsidized product. The ultimate question is, of course, that of whether either series should ever have been undertaken. The test will be whether, and if so to what extent, either series is likely to be consulted twenty years from now. In collaborative work the speed of publication equals the speed of the slowest contributor, plus three years. The slowest contributor is usually very slow indeed. In fact, he is nearly always a substitute, called upon at the very last moment, to do duty for someone who has died unexpectedly, or else, and more likely, just given up enervating letters on subjects that cause him embarrassment. Therefore, most collaborative work appears on publication to be rather out of date in relation to the latest research. However, if they are good examples of their kind, they will from then onwards date more slowly than the research articles and monographs which, while advancing knowledge, so often get it out of proportion. On present form, I think it likely that both the Cambridge project and the UNESCO one will wear quite well. The recent great formative period of African historiography is very likely now at an end. Probably, less than half of Africa is today in any real sense open to historical research. From now onwards we shall be learning more and more about less and less of the continent. The late 1970s and early 1980s may well come to look like a kind of high-water mark, which will not be genially submerged until the twenty-first century.

RKP

The caring master

By Richard Kindersley

MILOVAN DJILAS

Tito: The Story from Inside
Translated by Vasilje Kojić and Brock Hayes
185pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £7.95.
0 297 77885 4

What are we to make of the subtitle of Milovan Djilas's *Tito: The Story from Inside*? From inside what? Tito's mind? or the Yugoslav Communist leadership? But Djilas had not been in Tito's confidence, nor a member of the Party, since 1954. From inside Yugoslavia undeniably, at least in the geographical sense; but one thing to which Djilas devotes relatively little attention in this very personal memoir is what Tito meant to Yugoslavia and its people. A more accurate description of the book would perhaps have been: "Reflections on political power, Joseph Broz Tito and myself"; or it might have been better to stick to the title of the Serbo-Croat original, now published in London by Djilas's son as *Drustvo s Titom*, which might be freely rendered "My Life with Tito".

Djilas's *Conversations with Stalin and Warime* have established him as a historical witness and narrative writer of considerable stature, while *The New Class* breathed life into a sociological critique of communist society which has since been much applied (most recently in Michael Voslensky's work on the Nomenklatura, available in German and French but not yet in English). For writing a study of Tito, however, Djilas is both uniquely qualified and uniquely handicapped. He is only surviving *literateur* from among Tito's close comrades-in-arms; but he is also the only one to have spent twenty-five years of his life in political and social isolation — none of them in jail — under Tito's rule.

Djilas invites comparison with Trotsky, that other literary agent fallen from the communist empyrean, for he several times measures his subject against Stalin. Both Trotsky's *Stalin* and Djilas's *Tito* are books by unsuccessful intellectual politicians about successful unintellectual leaders; each is concerned to deflate a legendary reputation. But here the parallel ends. Trotsky wrote to destroy, and still hoped to defeat, the living and triumphant Stalin (who had him murdered before the book was finished); Tito was dying when Djilas's book was written and dead when it was published; but Djilas does not expect to

win in his lifetime and thus concedes victory to Tito. Trotsky wrote a massive historical demolition; Djilas has made a brief and reflective attempt at objectivity. Objectivity, however, does not come easily to him. Djilas is still struggling with his subjects, both politics in general and Tito himself. The first struggle is evinced by an uneasy fluidity of terms. In this book, for instance, there is mention of "an authentically Stalinist, or rather, Leninist, Party"; two pages on, it is "a Leninist or rather, a Stalinist, party"; turn ten pages more, and the Yugoslav Party is "a variation of Stalin's variation of the Leninist party". Such theoretical fuzziness is not dispelled by Djilas's penchant for the gnomish phrase. Take, for instance, the book's concluding words:

Tito's achievement cannot be separated from Tito's personality. His personality is more arresting and original than his achievement. And more enduring. . . . When all is said and done, the achievement makes the man, not the man the achievement.

One reader, at least, must ask to be forgiven for failing to find any precise statement or consistent argument in this passage. Reference to the Serbo-Croat text suggests that here, and elsewhere, Djilas may have been ill served by his translators and editors. (Certainly the translators have fallen into some familiar traps: "willfulness" is not, in the given context, the English for *samovolja*, nor "overcautious" for *precautivno*; and "still-frustrated" gets nowhere near the sense of *neizbavljeno*.) Yet the impression of terminological uncertainty remains. It is as if, on a range of general political issues, Djilas does not really know his own mind.

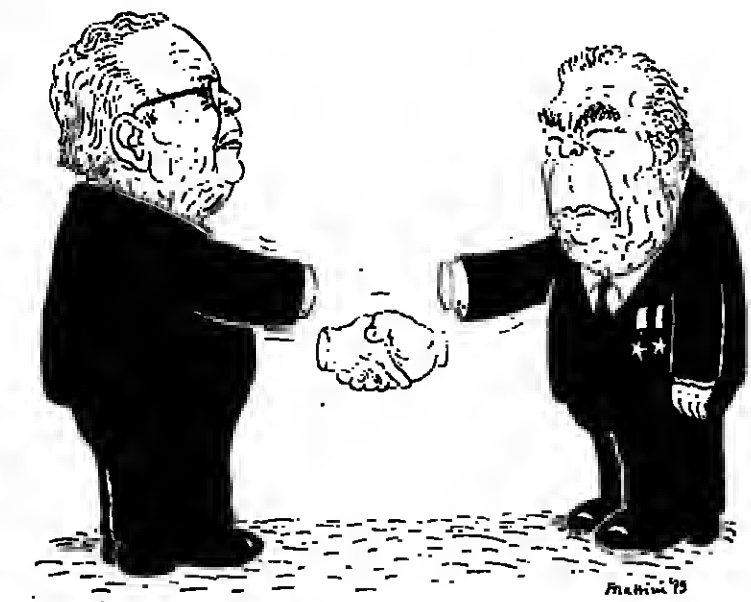
He is also, more explicitly, a prey to ambivalent feelings about Tito. From Stalin, in the *Conversations*, he was sufficiently distanced; and here, in the best chapter of the book, telling the story of his break with Tito, he achieves something of the same lucidity. But when, in a framework so loose as to be virtually imperceptible, he turns to the analysis of Tito's personality, he is still too involved to be impartial. This book, indeed, seems to be part of an effort to come to terms with the most important relationship of Djilas's public life.

Djilas grants Tito one supreme talent — for politics — but no other. He allows him some technical aptitude and linguistic facility (but can it really be true that, of two, three or four languages which Tito

knew, he expressed himself worst in Serbo-Croat?). Outside politics — what Djilas calls "pure politics" — his Tito is under-educated, of wide but superficial knowledge, a poor public speaker, though effective in a smaller forum, rash and nervous in his military judgment. Djilas's Tito is not the "bulldozer" of the Party (but who else can claim the title?); personally responsible for establishing the prison island of Goli Otok (but Djilas reckons that some such place would have been needed to deal with the pro-Stalinists anyway); "the most extravagant ruler of his time" (certainly the tally of Tito's palaces was considerable, but does he really compete with, say, Bokassa?); playing the role of the "caring master" of his people, even to the point of adopting — until he got bored with it — the former Royal custom of standing godfather to the ninth child in any Yugoslav family; nice in his manners and dress, and nice even, in one particular, in politics. Tito never, it seems, signed a death warrant himself and Djilas credits him with putting the brakes on the wholesale executions of 1945. Djilas allows that this attitude may have contributed to Yugoslavia's record of few death sentences. Djilas's Tito is given to encouraging slightly fantastic stories about himself; increasingly unwilling to accept criticism as he grew older; unable to achieve lasting happiness with any of his four wives. (Djilas, incidentally, supports the view that the rift with Jovanka, which darkened Tito's last years, arose from personal, not political, causes.)

Some of Djilas's subjects are still taboo for public discussion in Yugoslavia. A novel on Goli Otok (the Yugoslav equivalent, perhaps, of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*) has been written but remains unpublished; Tito's military reputation is sacrosanct, a necessary part of the legitimating testament of the Partisan War; apart from one or two recent photographs of Tito as the patriarch of the Broz family, his personal life is the subject of rumour, not biography. Djilas's book may help to shift these inhibitions one day, but this is unlikely to happen quickly.

Djilas attributes three qualities to Tito in a measure exceptional even among politicians: a strong sense of danger, an unquerable will to survive and an insatiable drive for power. But this does not tell us what Tito did with his survival and his power when he achieved them. Few would quarrel with Djilas's view that Tito had an exceptionally sure grasp of the politics of the War. Not will many question that Tito



"Tito in Moscow, May 18, 1979", by the Italian political cartoonist Giorgio Forattini whose drawings appear regularly in the periodicals L'Espresso, Panorama and Il Mulino.

established a degree of harmony among the Republics of Yugoslavia; whether, as Djilas suggests, too much of this harmony depended on Tito's personal dominance for the institutions to secure it, henceforth is perhaps the biggest question which that country faces. It is at least arguable that the "Swiss" state machinery which Tito set up before he did stand a better chance of success than any that Yugoslavia has had so far; and the application of the principle of Republican parity in leading Party, as well as State, bodies gives hope that it is more than just a facade.

It is, as I have suggested, sometimes hard to know exactly what Djilas means; and sometimes he seems to contradict himself. Of Tito's wives, for instance, he says that they all "played important and different roles in his life"; and yet "not one . . . exerted any substantial influence on his life . . ." At one moment Djilas finds that Tito, by concentrating on "pure politics" and paying less attention to the economy,

culture, sport and so on, has made life in Yugoslavia better than in other Communist states; but this valuable insight is elsewhere hedged by the assertion that "politics touches on everyone and everything". And when Djilas says that to set Tito could have done otherwise than purge the Croat, Serb and other Republican leaderships of "nationalist" figures in the early 1970s without risking his achievement is to ask "the wrong question", he is surely dodging responsibility.

This is a work of de-Titoization — and also, incidentally, de-Kardeljization: Kardelj is here denied the half-share which Djilas has hitherto allowed him, in the origin of the idea of self-management. It is plain, if only from his habit of debating with himself before his reader, that Djilas is not without inner doubts and conflicts. It seems to me that Tito is in a more complicated character than he really was, it may be because the book is almost as much about Djilas as it is about Tito.

Tell it not in Moscow

By Erik de Mauny

PAUL LENDVAY
The Bureaucracy of Truth: How Communist Governments Manage the News
285pp. Burnett Books/André Deutsch.
£6.95. 0 233 97290 0

Any visitor to Moscow who understands Russian can easily decipher the huge rooftop slogans dominating Smolensk Square, opposite the Soviet Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, which proclaim that "The Soviet Press is a powerful weapon in the hands of the Party". The same message recurs again and again, with the force of incantation, in every branch of the Soviet communications network, on radio and television, on Tass and Novosti, from mighty Pravda down to the lowliest *kolkhoz* sheet. In short, it is the ruling Communist Party which alone decides what is newsworthy and what is not, what may be revealed to the general public and what must still be suppressed — and which will brook no internal murmur of dissent from the approved line at any given moment.

But there is far more to this than, as this well-researched, incisive and deeply absorbing study convincingly shows. Not content with keeping his own people in ignorance, the Soviet regime constantly threatens by fair means or foul, ranging from diplomatic pressure to outright blackmail, to impose its own interpretation of the world's development on "other" nations which, in no way share its

ethical standards or its long-term aims. Furthermore, although the Soviet Union is by far the grossest offender, the same pattern of news manipulation and distortion can be observed in varying degrees in all the satellite countries of the Soviet bloc, at its cruelest in East Germany, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, with rather more flexibility and sophistication in Hungary and Poland.

It is a depressing picture, but one that needs to be far more widely known and accurately assessed by Western governments and in the so-called Third World countries. Paul Lendvay is well equipped to fill in the significant details: a journalist in his native Hungary from 1948 to 1956, he came to the West in 1957, and for the past twenty years has travelled and reported extensively on Eastern Europe for the *Financial Times*.

The concept of total Party control over the media is not new. It was foreshadowed in a number of Lenin's early pronouncements, long before the October Revolution, and is regularly restated by such ideological gurus as Stalin and Ponomarev. Other things may have changed since the death of Stalin, but rigid control of the news remains a cornerstone of the entire communist structure, both in its defensive and offensive aspects at home, and living in the best of all possible worlds, abroad, to serve its Leninist pursuit in *Bureaucracy of Truth*, "as the so-called fourth pillar of foreign policy, in addition to diplomacy, the armed forces and the economy". Indeed, to a communist state, any abandonment of news control can only be seen as a fundamental threat to its own survival (it was the abolition of censorship by the Dubcek regime in Czechoslovakia in

1968 that provided the final spur for the Soviet bloc invasion).

All that has really changed since 1917 is that the mechanism of news management and control has been steadily refined, and Lendvay gives a detailed and vivid account of how it works in practice. This may cause some to sneer. It is certainly not widely known in the West, for example, that access to uncensored information is one of the most coveted privileges in the Soviet Union, or that "bullshit" of more or less doctored news for strictly limited circulation among the higher ranks of the Party hierarchy. There are also regular "guidance sessions" for editors-in-chief of the leading Party newspapers, a number of whom are, in any case, members of the Central Committee.

There is, however, a manifest difference between what they are privately told, and what they hear on their readers. It is therefore often instructive to note which matters of international concern the Soviet news media choose to ignore. For example, for many weeks after Watergate, bad news leaked into the headlines of Western newspapers; the Soviet press maintained an impenetrable silence. The reason is probably quite simple. The names of Nixon and Brezhnev had been closely linked as co-authors of a new phase in East-West cooperation; and to have informed the Soviet public of Nixon's troubles might have implied some misjudgment on the part of their own beloved leader.

Some of them — those who listen to Western broadcasts — learn of those troubles anyway, in spite of the institution of Soviet jamming, involving the

use of powerful and extremely costly transmitters, broadcast by the BBC, VOA and other Western stations to reach a wide audience inside the Soviet bloc. The Soviet authorities find this highly distasteful (while Lendvay gives a detailed and vivid account of how it works in practice. This may cause some to sneer. It is certainly not widely known in the West, for example, that access to uncensored information is one of the most coveted privileges in the Soviet Union, or that "bullshit" of more or less doctored news for strictly limited circulation among the higher ranks of the Party hierarchy. There are also regular "guidance sessions" for editors-in-chief of the leading Party newspapers, a number of whom are, in any case, members of the Central Committee.

The ambiguities remain, notably over the implementation of so-called "United Three" of the Final Act, which deals with measures to ease the flow of people, ideas and information between East and West, and later also to improve journalistic working conditions. There have been some minor concessions on the Soviet side, such as the provision of multiple exit and entry visas for foreign correspondents. But in the past three years, a number of Moscow-based correspondents have also been the targets for vicious campaigns of intimidation, leading in several cases to expulsion, so that the situation is now rather worse than it was before Helsinki. In the post-Helsinki period, there have also been a number of conferences, first in Belgium and more recently in Madrid, where the East and West on such questions as human rights and the free flow of information have remained as acrimonious as ever. Indeed, with the fumes of acrimony still hanging heavily over Madrid, Paul Lendvay's book could not have made a more timely appearance. Communist regimes have long been adept at creating a deceptive picture to mask their motives and long-term aims. *The Bureaucracy of Truth* throws some welcome and much-needed light on what they really mean when they speak of *democracy* and *peaceful coexistence*.

Lendvay quite rightly devotes a good deal of attention to the Helsinki Conference and its aftermath. The conference was only convened after many months of strenuous

pressure from the Soviet side (several Siberian forests must have been chopped down to provide Soviet commentators with newsprint for their arguments), to culminate, in August 1975, in the 40,000-word-long agreement known as the Final Act — as the author aptly describes it, "a very long, extremely complex and profoundly ambiguous document".

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O to be out of England

By Anthony Quinton

PAUL FUSSELL
Abroad: British Literary Travelling Between the Wars
246pp. Oxford University Press. £8.95.
0 19 502767 1

Paul Fussell's description of his book in its subtitle is "British literary travelling between the wars" ("travelling" because the book has been printed in the United States). It does not take the form of a treatise with consecutive argument, or of a systematic description of its topic, but is more in the nature of an album, a somewhat random sequence of perspectives and examples. As it proceeds its focus narrows so that by the end it has become a study of travel books written by skilled imaginative writers and with a serious literary intention.

But its point of departure is more comprehensive: the generally hostile attitude to England taken by the young English writers who survived or escaped the 1914 war. Fussell sees this aversion coming into existence in the war and showing itself in persistent literary references to strange, always exotic and, in wartime, variably rare. Once the war was over, the hostility could express itself in contempt. The mentally lively could vote with their stanzas against DORA, the Lord's Day Observance Society, the Lord Chamberlain and all the rest of the diabolical apparatus conspired to the obstruction of pleasure and self-realization.

Fussell has an arresting quotation from Augustus Birrell to explain what might otherwise appear excessive about the anti-patriotism of the new generation: Birrell said in November 1915 that "the for one would forbid the use, during the war, of poetry". It would help to explain anti-patriotism if it were intended in the sense Fussell implies. Since it was uttered before Birrell's bad moment of Easter 1916 and he was quite a witty man, I am inclined to read it as a fastidious expression of resistance to the rhymed heroics whose vocabulary Fussell himself so effectively set out in *The Great War and Modern Memory*, which included *vanquish, slouch, night, warrior, the foe, etc.* There is a touch of irony in the idea of the use of poetry (despite Elton's Norton lectures).

Among the familiar hedonistic deficiencies of English life that Fussell enumerates are the weather and the food. He defends English weather against that of the north-eastern United States, plausibly observing that "if the United States had been colonized from west to east instead of the reverse, the northeastern United States today would be populated as sparsely as North Dakota". He properly disdains A. J. F. Taylor's puzzlement at the productivity of cultivated Englishmen for self-exile "at the best time mankind, or at any rate Englishmen, had known: more comfortable, with more welfare for the mass of the people packed into a few years than into the whole of previous history". That sort of municipal complacency is just what people were in flight from.

He makes two good points about the passport, a legacy of DORA now required for all foreign travel. The passport photograph, which makes everyone look like a criminal, he sees as a symbol of the characteristic self-contempt of the "modern sensibility". Secondly, increase in travel, and to bureaucratic interference with it, expresses itself in a universal hatred of customs officials. He points out that Hitler was the son of such an official, as was Ataturk.

If anti-patriotism, a longing for sunshine, *saucy delectable* and easy sex, is one impulse behind *interwar* travel, another is the characteristic self-contempt of the "modern sensibility". At this point he launches into a lengthy, self-mockingly exaggerated meditation on the replacement of travel by tourism, the conveyance in disreputable vehicles of passive and controlled groups to specially prepared foreign environments. It is entertaining enough in its mass-market way, but it is a little tedious. Fussell's intention, it seems, to support his argument that travel is dead and tourism is just taken over (pace Paul Theroux, Bruce Chatwin and Jonathan Raban, all of whom he mentions): there is good material here about tourist

pseudo-places like Zermatt, the Algarve, Washington and Disneyland; about the perfect international uniformity of airports; about the racking problem of tourists; about techniques of distancing oneself from the touristish *herd* or *drome*.

After this we are swept away into some thoughts about the symbolic nature of ships, ports and sailors and an opportunity for distinguishing two sorts of traveller has been lost. There is really very little in common between a hedonist like Cyril Connolly and a quasi-religious seeker of spiritual wholeness or something of the sort like D. H. Lawrence. Robert Byron, whom Fussell particularly and persuasively admires, had an aesthetic object in his travels (coloured architecture, to put the matter briefly) but he was not concerned with, and was happy to do without, comfort, let alone luxury.

It may be that exploration proper, Fussell's precursor of travel, was confined to very remote and marginal bits of the world by 1920, although some of the outings of Peter Fleming surely amounted to it. There still remains a difference between travel as an adventure and travel as an escape. Both forms had been practised by an earlier generation. Kipling, Conrad and W. H. Hudson were adventurers, even if in an indirect way, by profession or accident of birth. Henry James and Forster were seekers, in western Europe and in Italy respectively, of a better world; a pleasant one, not a more exciting one. These Edwardian writers had stay-at-home contemporaries: Hardy, Shaw, Wells and Arnold Bennett. And these, it may be noticed, were all, by comparison, of a lower social class. Of the travellers Conrad was an aristocrat, the others were gentlemen, members of the officer class. The spiritual little Englishmen were all of the pettiest petty bourgeoisie.

Most of Fussell's travellers are of the upper middle class or above: Byron (Robert), Connolly, Norman Douglas, Peter Fleming, Graham Greene, Isherwood, Orwell, Osbert Sitwell, Waugh. Lawrence is the sole major exception and not too severe an exception at that; in view of his aristocratic wife and almost exclusively upper-class array of friends, perhaps it is not very significant. It was this class, now more or less absorbed into a more inclusive graduate order, that established the tradition of individualism and eccentricity which Fussell sees as accounting for the special importance of travel writing in English literature; it supplied the officers and administrators of the old British Empire — an institution which accustomed its principal servants to travelling, though it did not itself result from a constitutional propensity among the English to travel.

Connolly's *Horizon* was the house organ of the old officer-class, European-minded intelligentsia. Fussell recalls its feature "Where Shall John go?", in which wartime longing for free, non-military voyaging was vicariously fed in the same way that a more physical appetite was catered for with the consultant brochures of André Simon's *Concise Encyclopedia of Gastronomy*. It is the obliterating ingestion of this class that is the role of travel in literature, and not the growth of tourism, which can be avoided or exploited by anyone of

reasonable intelligence and determination. For although there are still plenty of travel books proper, they are all adventure books, the outcome of distinct, finite projects of the explorer-kind. The novels of those who have begun to publish since the war, if not all culturally xenophobic, like Kingsley Amis's *I Like It Here*, are seldom set anywhere abroad, apart from American campuses.

So Fussell is right, I think, to suggest that travel was an important theme in interwar British writing. But it was not mainly, let alone exclusively, important because of the travel books strictly so called that it produced. The travels of Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh matter because of *The Power and the Glory* and *A Handful of Dust*, not because of *The Lawless Roads* and *Ninety-Two Days*. It figures notably in the work of the tiny literary minority of the imperial ruling class, habituated to travel by the nature of their family life, attracted to travel of the hedonistic kind by an old-fashioned liberal education, inspired to adventurous travel by inherited self-confidence. For products of the Leavisite sixth forms of the more recent age, however, maturity begins at home.

Four writers stand out in view of the particular attention they are given in *Abroad*. Robert Byron is Fussell's favourite, the beneficiary of a 37-page eulogy. His book *The Shogun* (1928), about Mount Athos, was reviewed in *Vogue* by D. H. Lawrence, who found it "charming" and was impressed by its "sense of purpose" despite the levity. Fussell writes affectionately about Norman Douglas and is admirably uninfluenced by the paedophilic character of Douglas's flights to Europe. His description of Douglas as "a sort of Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig turned inside out" is agreeable and charming if not entirely clear in its import. He compares him to Nabokov, leaving more stress on the correspondence of Douglas's interest in snakes with Nabokov's in butterflies than on the Lolita aspect of the matter, the main link between the writers being a combination of contempt for the modern world, erudition and playfulness.

Fussell concludes an admiring survey of D. H. Lawrence's travel books: "Because he lived with such intensity of perception and such shrewdness of imagination, his four travel books seem to sketch the stages of his own life. And because the emanations of genius touch on all of human life, his travel books do more than that: they seem to designate and explore the four stages of everyone's life."

It is in no way to disagree with this favourable judgment to observe that in his travel books Lawrence's genius was kept under some slight measure of control by the facts of his subject, so that they are preserved from the frequently ridiculous extravagances of his novels. Fussell makes much of the use of prepositions in Lawrence's work, solemnly underlining the *his* and *its* and *one* in selected passages of prose, and verse, in a purported demonstration of both the strength and the literary manner of working of Lawrence's "sense of place". In a small experiment I have found 23 prepositions used in a spatial sense on the first page of Kafka's *The Castle*, but only nine on the first page of *Women in Love*.

"My highest recommendation. Leanly vivid writing, an authentic feel of evil, a sense of things unsaid." *H. R. F. Keating, The Times*
"Tough, seamy, superior writing, the pinnacle of the genre." *Observer* £6.95

The Bomb Will Not Drop

The news, according to the devil, is always bad, but never without some tincture of encouragement. Facing the serpent in cold weather, I see a photograph of masking things across a network and am not left to them, but instead behold in window above Prague, a screaming shape falling, perhaps of tyrant, perhaps of comforter, indifferently horrible in death. What fortune had the platted brain to fear such loose coherence? The you I love frightens me much more than all defecation. Now just therefore that I should spend my middle years pursuing chimera while the real horror sets up stations on the jaws.

Peter Porter

Fussell makes good use of Waugh to show how the skills of the novelist are used in giving shape and point to the records of the traveller, a comparison made simple by the availability of Waugh's diaries. He acknowledges, but takes no real account of, the rather forced, or, at any rate, unwilling, nature of Waugh's trips abroad: to get over divorce (and make some money) at one end of his life, to recover from Pinfolditis at the other. Waugh hated "abroad", as Fussell prints out, and was truer to the class of his birth than that of his adoption. Fussell sees him, in a mocking reference to Robert Graves, as disdaining voluntary exile as an indulgence in angry self-congratulation.

Something of a double standard is applied to the monetary aspect of Waugh's travels. In the Mediterranean on the *Stella Polaris* he earns his free passage with some glum travel-agent matter about the splendid appointments of the ship and the marvels of its cuisine. As the author of *Robbery Under Law*, Waugh becomes "a strident (and paid) doctrinaire". Perhaps the advertising matter is forgiven because it contrasts so self-accommodatingly with the rest of the book it appears in. Waugh's offence in the book about Mexico is that he actually believed in the doctrines he was paid to propound it.

Generally notable for his positive enthusiasms, Fussell can also be rather sharp. He describes Archibald MacLeish as "a pack-ard", and "no adult", he says, "could write a novel as silly as Connolly's *The Rock Pool* about the unrealistic 'influence of any other place' (than the Mediterranean)".

Abroad does with a definition of the travel book which picks out *The Road to Oxenford* and *Old Coltrane* all right, but hardly covers such excellent works as *A Pattern of Islands* or *Elephant Bill*, which

are devoid of any elaborate "literary" intention, although not without literary skill. Fussell makes the good point that with the contemptuous superannation of the reflective essay, done to death by literary doodlers like Robert Lynd, the travel book is a convenient pretext for general homilies. In a characteristic application of his casual, but often illuminating method, Fussell sets up a sequence of comparisons between travel books and war memoirs, comic novels, romances of the quest, picaresque or pastoral, placing travel books by delimiting their boundaries on a rough map of literary genres. The voyage, he concludes, is a metaphor for life and death, a large enough topic, even if the genre is now low in prestige.

At the end of the 1930s travel books proper turned into war reports like *Homage to Catalonia* and *Spanish Testament*. Fussell is, with reason, hard on Auden's *Journey to a War* (with Isherwood) and just as hard, but with much less reason, on his *Letters from Iceland* (with Louis MacNeice). Having convinced himself, despite evidence that he provides against the idea, that the genre is exhausted, he finishes by describing his book as an elegy. In saying that it is really an album, I have meant to imply that one should not take its intimations of a thesis too seriously, but be content to enjoy a perceptive and largely good-natured Swan tour of a collection of minor but agreeable literary remains. On the whole the guide is also a well-informed one. But the thought that his knowledge of American literature is less sure than his knowledge of ours occurs when he lists among the travel books of 1934 John O'Hara's *Appointment in Samarra*, helpfully telling us in a parenthesis that Samarra is in Iraq. O'Hara got his title, which symbolizes the inexorability of fate, from a fable that occurs in Maugham's play *Sheppey*. I have no idea where Maugham got it from; *The Arabian Nights*, perhaps.

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Re-reading the Thirties

By Marigold Johnson

BERNARD BERGONZI:
The Roman Persuasion
192pp. Weidenfeld. £6.95.
0 297 77927 3

Passionate interest can still be aroused in the House of Commons, it is said, by mention of the Spanish Civil War. Doubtless a vicarious nostalgia is largely responsible—those were the days, after all, when political ideals led not just to the picket line but to the battlefield, when war meant a few thousand volunteers marching with rifles, and when lines from fighting poets made the front page. But nearly two-thirds of the British who fought were wounded or killed and the ideals were not all on one side. The grim events, so fully and variously documented at the time by superb writers—and by camera, paint, and pencil—have tended to deter novelists since (the notable exceptions are Hemingway and Malraux).

Did Bernard Bergonzi—a small boy in the mid-1930s, but now an academic authority on the period—decide that his first venture into fiction should aim to fill that literary lacuna? *The Roman Persuasion* is clearly the fruit of much thought; it is in line with a fictional tradition going back at least to Thackeray, who was, in *Henry Esmond*, re-interpreting history, and who lent authenticity by bringing Steele Onslow before the Marlborough battle. Here we have Hilaire Belloc (offstage) sending "a case or two of wine at Christmas", and "a man called William Joyce" offering an article to the Catholic magazine which figures prominently in the novel. We also have a detailed account, by a fictitious ex-IRA volunteer called O'Toole, of the disastrous exploits of the Irish Brigade under his former Blueshirt General O'Duffy, whose *Crusade in Spain* (1938) gives a rather different version. Auden's lines on "the dangerous flood of history" provide an epigraph to the book.

But it is clear that the War is not Bernard Bergonzi's only preoccupation; nor is he writing fashionable "faction" about the Thirties, Balzac-style. He is, indeed, notably unfashionable in narrowing his focus to a small circle of English Catholics, who sided strongly with the Nationalist cause, and his interest in them is political and academic, not merely documentary.

Wilfrid Cartwright, tweedy and gentle with his fall white moustache and Lancashire vowels, lives comfortably on the edge of the Sussex Downs, looking after, since his beloved wife's death, by three unmarried daughters. Dominica is a kindly war widow, Helen a civil servant, Claire a teacher—and sometimes "Pa" has to silence their childish arguments, despite their Oxford degrees and effusive "Dorlings". Their late mother, well-known as a poet of the Alice Meynell era, had discovered the shy talent of young Wilfrid on a visit to the Literary and Debating Society of the Parib of the Precious Blood in Preston, and together they had run a scholarly Catholic quarterly, the *English and Overseas Review*. Their exclusive, though materially modest, circle includes a visiting priest—Father Giles from the Oratory, who, we are more than once reminded, is the son of a peer and whose sister, Neil has married Wilfrid's nephew Martin Tollymore.

Martin, with his ready-made black suit from Turin worn for Sussex "Sunday dinner", his cigars, and his European ideas, appears more than Belloc's appearance and will clearly come to no good: "You can't exclude politics if you're thinking about a just social order," he says firmly, and tells Wilfrid that Continental Liberals, along with other socialists, are condemned by the Pope. A division, clarified by attitudes to war, develops within the Church; Martin renames the *Journal Rex Latine* and applauds fascist contributions, losing his pretty, jazz-loving Nell to a poet soon to die in Spain; Wilfrid's only son, Crispin writes graphically of the *regimes* in their red berets and quotes bloodthirsty Carlist songs; for him, all atrocities are perpetrated by Reds; the parish priest was crucified in front of his flock, and in another place burnt alive. But Father Giles, preoccupied from publishing progressive views, opts for missionary exile, and the Cartwrights share his misgivings.

Martin too goes to Spain, but not to fight. He interviews the Generalissimo, hears the truth about the bombing of Guernica, and meets a smooth German Catholic aristocrat who outlines the true future of Europe under a revived Holy Roman Empire; he is persuaded that here is *Romanitas*.

This "Path to Rome" is preoccupied with

dispassionate logic—where else could the totalitarian Faith lead after Spain? To be fair, we are also shown the English alternative, of Wilfrid uneasily feasting on Friday off prawns and turbot (with white wine and green butter) in the company of a *bon vivant* signor, the two agreeing that Father Fisher's efforts to Italianize the English Catholics "merely failed", and that Signor Mussolini is vulgarizing the Eternal City; hypocritical and snobbish maybe, but their political credentials pass muster.

If Bernard Bergonzi's aim was to expose the influence of the Church on a generation, he is fair and most informative, although keen students might care to look too at literature of the period—the poetry of Blunden, the fictions of Maurice Baring or Evelyn Waugh, the lives of Belloc and Chesterton, the *Tablet* and the *Dublin Review*: here is the authentic Catholic establishment voice, and it never apologizes for its political views. *The Roman Persuasion* is, however, somehow too cerebral to work simply as a novel, even of ideas. This partly because the idealists—Dominica, Crispin, Father Giles—remain sketchy figures, types rather than individuals. Perhaps it is inescapable, in a novel so carefully planned on the period, to find oneself nervously clue-spotting, with points scored for identifying actual or literary

look-alikes. Who is the flamboyantly drunken poet "Caspar Mary MacCorquodale", whose verses on Spain appear in the *Tablet* before he is given a martyr's requiem at Westminster Cathedral? How close are the echoes, in magazine potities, of the *Adelphi*, or of *Poetry* or *Point Point*? Which Sussex household provides the model for Wilfrid and Susan Cartwright?

Despite the intriguing intellectual exercise, there is an unness, especially apparent in the domestic dialogue, about Bernard Bergonzi's efforts to bring these curious and so nearly recognizable characters to life. Even in the most devout Catholic households, theological debating points were not scored at every meal-time; surely Martin too sophisticated to refer to his father-in-law as "his Lordship"; and Professors of Eng Lit should avoid setting the seduction scene on a "wine-dark" sofa.

It is a compliment to suggest that at its descriptive best—in Preston, and travelling to the battlefield in Spain—this novel is as good an evocative record as the Olivia Manning Balkan trilogy about a later war; the difference, of course, is that in one case the author was there. It might be good to hear what becomes of Martin Tollymore among his country's enemies, although there appears no hint that this could be the first volume of a trilogy.

Exploring Eleanor

By Jennifer Uglow

JUDITH CHERNIAK:
The Daughter
216pp. London Magazine Editions. £5.50.
0 06 010757 X

At the beginning and end of *The Daughter* Judith Cherniak touches on the way the relationship of Eleanor Marx and Edward Avelling leads itself to literary treatment. It is an enigma which demands unveiling, a melodrama worthy of "A Fox Nelson's" pen, a metaphor for moral, political and sexual confrontations. Even close associates saw it in this way: in *One Way of Love* Dolly Radford turned Eleanor into a doomed romantic heroine, while Shaw used Avelling as a model for the unprincipled Louis Brandt in *The Doctor's Dilemma*. Judith Cherniak deliberately reminds us that Eleanor too is an artificial construction. The book's continual play with form and parody creates a tension between the "free" narrator and the cornered, passionate heroine pinned down like a specimen for emotional dissection.

In searching out the "truth" of Eleanor's suicide the novel is, in part, a detective story. It opens, appropriately, with the drama of the inquest, complete with Shavian scene setting, stage directions and audience response:

Dolly Radford: "Murderer!"
Clementina Black: "We must insist on an investigation."
Oliver Schreiner: "She's better off dead."

This witty placing of the friends to whom Eleanor turned in vain during her life is typical of Cherniak's very thoughtful presentation.

The stylistic variety of *The Daughter* enhances the effect of an investigation which moves from the public arena (speeches, lectures, statistics) through Eleanor's circle of friends (letters, dialogue, parlor games) and into the inner space of memory and dream. The skilful use of "pastiche" also evokes a period flavour while suggesting the author's own historical limitations, whether the subject be Avelling's lecture on "the new science of materialism, urbanism and love" or a meeting between Engels and Eleanor, where "in the foreground, the charming turned and everted of the Zoological Gardens might suggest to a thoughtful observer the English genius for domesticating the wild, for taming and neutralizing passion, for pacifying the oppressed by offering the illusion of freedom . . .". The range of styles implies that there is no single truth about Eleanor, merely different kinds of rhetoric for describing her.

Judith Cherniak does, however, choose one version. Her interest is in Eleanor Marx not as mover of historical forces but as their victim, not as inspired public speaker and tireless committee worker, but as "Tussy", "the daughter". "My father had the most powerful mothering impulse

of anyone I have known. With us he was possessive, protective, helpless to deny us his time, his heart's blood, his life." It is the search to regain this childhood security which leads Eleanor to invest so much in her union with the self-regarding Avelling. Growing in resonance throughout the novel is the similarity between Marx and Avelling, which Eleanor senses in the blinding of fear in her dreams. The resemblance is confirmed by the revelation that Marx fathered and then agreed to banish the child of the family servant, Helen, which shows that the two men are united in their egotistical contempt for the feelings of women.

Behind Tussy's paralysis ("Impossible to choose, impossible to renounce") lies a complex of deeply pessimistic ideas. Here, despite the vocabulary of the 1880s, it becomes hard to distinguish the viewpoint of author and heroine. To what extent can Tussy's choice be free when the analysis shows her to be determined just as rigidly by her emotional life as her theories of dialectical materialism or evolution convince her she is in her societal and physical being? She comes to see all relationships, whether sexual, political or evolutionary, as governed not by consent but by "necessity": "The weak gave themselves up to the protection of the strong and the strong used the weak to extend their power and domain". The physical and economic strength of men ensures a perpetual imbalance of power, but the problem lies deeper still. All Tussy's friends (except Shaw and Clementina Black, who opt out of the struggle) define their identity in terms of their personal and sexual relationships. Thus their intellectual radicalism is constantly undermined by the exhausting insecurity of their emotional lives. In a crowning irony the revolutionary heroine takes as her model the bourgeois Emma Bovary whose story she has translated: "*Alors, sa situation, tel qu'un abîme, se représentait*".

Tussy's friends are not devoid of vitality—indeed Cherniak achieves the near impossible task of rendering Oliver Schreiner vaguely human—but there is too much emphasis on their representative status and the book acquires the air of a modern "modality" (*"The Daughter's Dilemma"*). Dolly and Emma Radford display a liberal individualism. Havelock Bille declares that "the next century will see sexuality restored to its central place in human experience". Schreiner proclaims the "New Sisterhood". Clementina Black calls for political pragmatism. Engels, Morris, Shaw purvey different brands of social prophecy. At times the dialogue has the tone of a primer in sexual politics and socialism; and it is difficult to forget the bulky biographies and to ignore the tricks played with sources. But the presentation of Eleanor's life is not a mere pastiche. It is an extraordinarily interesting novel. By virtue of her imaginative simplicity and formal virtuosity, Judith Cherniak succeeds to a remarkable degree in shaping a story which suggests the possibilities and complexity

Riverboat shuffle

By Holly Eley

ANN SCHLEE:
Rhine Journey
165pp. Macmillan. £5.95.
0 333 28320 1

On the face of it, Ann Schlee's *Rhine Journey* is a brief period diversion, an account of the last few days of a middle class English family's *petit tour* by paddle steamer down the Rhine during the summer of 1851. Because the style is agreeably mannered and the characters remind us of characters from novels actually written in the 1850s (in particular *Villette*), it is easy to accept *Rhine Journey* as a light, historically accurate travelogue with a hint of mystery thrown in. But a not immediately discernible seriousness of purpose underpins the entertainment.

The Reverend Charles Morrison is a low church prebendary whose formal, slightly comic, adherence to his religion effectively isolates him from current moral issues. His wife, Marion, is a Victorian matron of "heightened sensibility": her fine feelings, available on demand, tend to resemble clichéd chunks of Murray—her own compressed alternative to *Bend Sin*. Both are sustained by the conventions of their nationality, class and church; neither is given to introspection. They counteract moments of stress and fatigue through distractions such as the distribution of English sermons to Bavarian peasant peasants, and ward off migraine with smelling salts. Accompanying them on their travels are their seventeen-year-old daughter Ellie (whose self-willed charm is reminiscent of Jane Austen's Emma) and her chaperone, Charlotte, Reverend Morrison's splinter sister. It is in the depiction of the menopausal Charlotte—an intelligent woman on the threshold of freedom at an unfortunate time of life—that Ann Schlee's gifts are most evident.

Two chance encounters serve as catalysts for Charlotte's belated but ultimately suc-

cessful attempt at self-determination. One is with a young Prussian officer who, struck by Ellie's unsophisticated beauty, follows the family from Coblenz to Cologne; the other with an English family man, travelling the same route, who bears an unsettling resemblance to Charlotte's erstwhile suitor (rejected as a social inferior by her brother, who subsequently placed her as housekeeper to an elderly vicar).

Although the effects of travel are partly responsible for Charlotte's final act of defiance, her psychological change occurs principally as the result of uncontrollable fantasies and dreams. Miss Schlee is at her most sensitive in the understated interweaving of dream with reality, in the shadowy meetings and conversations that may or may not have taken place between Charlotte and the unattainable English traveller whom she may or may not be the *de-pelting* of her ex-lover.

Subtly placed historical clues are a dominant feature of *Rhine Journey*. We are always aware of the political, social and religious realities of Rhenish Prussia during the unstable regime of Frederick Wilhelm IV. Though Marx is not mentioned, a subplot which involves the escape of political refugees is one of the devices used to bring Charlotte's awakening to the possibilities of life beyond a Home Counties vicarage. Revolution, so much in the air at the time, makes little or no impression on the complacently controlled Morrisons but is shown to accentuate Charlotte's sense of liberation.

Our growing involvement with Charlotte's struggle to determine her own future, and our sympathy with her attempt to free herself from Victorian and parental constraints, are not obtained at the expense of our appreciation of the delights of nineteenth-century tourism. The real strength (and charm) of this first novel lies in Miss Schlee's commonsensical, Austen-like approach to ordinary people's ordinary situations, as well as in her feeling for, and meticulous research into, period and place.

Out of court

By Savkar Altinel

GEROME WELDMAN:
Counselors-at-Law
401pp. Bodley Head. £6.50.
0 370 30378 4

"So far as the general public was concerned", begins a chapter in *Counselors-at-Law*, "William Trullit could have been the name of a baseball player or a British novelist". The truth, however, is that it is a prestigious New York law firm, so prestigious in fact that its senior partners can charge \$500 an hour for their services and still clock up 1000 billable hours every year. Furthermore, there are payments in kind from some clients. The TCH, or "Trullit Coffee House", in the firm's offices at 635 Madison Avenue, is equipped with automatic dispensing free Cola One ("The One Calorie per Bottle Soft Drink") and Champagne ("The No Calorie Candy Bar") supplied by a grateful Frenchise Foods, Inc.

Not all the clients, though, are paying ones. A certain amount of legal assistance is available free of charge to the needy, and it is William Trullit who is on such "pro bono" assignments. In Alabama, that young Jahan Trullit associate named Tom Lichlie runs into trouble. His task is to prepare an appeal for a fifteen-year-old black boy who has been sentenced to death for murder, but the unorthodox tactics he employs cause a row and he has to return to New York. Shortly afterwards he himself is accused of murder and the State of Alabama starts extradition proceedings against him.

Lichlie's employers seem strangely reluctant to help their man. The lawyers they provide quit one after another and the case drags on till the trial finally comes to light. The problem, apparently, is that the interests of the non-paying client, Lichlie, had been sent to defend have come into conflict with those of a paying one, a certain David Rumbold, who is being considered for nothing less than the Vice Presidency of the United States and is therefore most anxious that his questionable

business dealings in the South should not be made public.

It is possible to raise a number of questions about this. Would a fifteen-year-old boy, for instance, really be in danger of being executed, even in Alabama? And why, in a book set firmly in August 1978, is there a search for a Vice-President who one was in fact in office at the time? Either no dates should have been given or an attempt should have been made to preserve a measure of historical accuracy.

Such difficulties aside, there is too often a question of what we are supposed to make of the story we are told. Despite its title *Counselors-at-Law* takes in much more than just the legal profession. Among its characters are financiers, stock business characters and politicians, all the rich and powerful individuals it depicts are greedy and dishonest. Corruption exists in the most unlikely places, and even Lichlie turns out to have been acting out of selfish motives. The author's aim seems to be to condemn an inhuman society pursuing petty goals while sowing "Little Jo" in Alabama left to face the consequences.

Unfortunately there are too many shifts of tone and attitude in the book for this message to emerge with anything like clarity. Weldman cannot extend to contemporary America the savage scorn with which Dickens viewed Victorian England; the sheer variety of his intentions defeats him. *Counselors-at-Law* is an adventure story, a courtroom drama; a sensational blockbuster and a serious novel, and it demands all the various moral and emotional responses appropriate to these different genres. As a result, though it is no *Blind House*, it is at times as confusing as Jarndyce and Jarndyce.

Lichlie's employers seem strangely reluctant to help their man. The lawyers they provide quit one after another and the case drags on till the trial finally comes to light. The problem, apparently, is that the interests of the non-paying client, Lichlie, had been sent to defend have come into conflict with those of a paying one, a certain David Rumbold, who is being considered for nothing less than the Vice Presidency of the United States and is therefore most anxious that his questionable

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Lightly laconic

By Stephen Fender

EUGENE O'NEILL
Poems 1912-1944
Edited by Donald Gallup
119pp. Capc. £4.50.
0 224 01870 1

Eugene O'Neill wrote poems before he wrote plays, but not many, and those mainly limited—not only to certain periods of his life, but also in range and (to be frank) in interest. Donald Gallup, curator of the American Literature Collection at Yale, has collected all seventy-two of them, from the earliest light verse published in the *New London* (Connecticut) *Telegraph* to the more private poems sequestered so long by his third wife, Carlotta. The editing is immaculate, as one would expect from this most expert of scholar-librarians. The place, date of composition and, where relevant, the publishing history are given at the foot of each piece. Topical allusions are explained and parodic models supplied. Otherwise, apart from a brief introduction, the poems are left to speak for themselves.

What do they say? Not a lot. The journalist pieces, which O'Neill called "laconics", are imitations or parodies of Kipling, Longfellow, Rossetti's version of Villon's "Ballade des dames du temps jadis" (like one about "Where are the snows of yesteryear?"), John Massfield and James Whitcomb Riley. The jokey application of "serious" formulae to current events or other ephemera was an old staple of American newspaper humour, and the *Oxford Book of American Light Verse* supplies dozens of examples in the vein of O'Neill's twist on *Hawaii*:

O the hilling and the consing!
Those three golden days of summer,
When the Waterways Convention
Came at last to Old New London.

Clowns from far distant regions
Come to test our festive welcome,
Came and spoke, and then departed.
Spoke of what they knew, and often—
Wacky spoke of that they knew not.

Of his "laconics" O'Neill's judgement was both modest and accurate. He thought them trivial occasional pieces written to order for a provincial newspaper. When an early biographer, Barrett Clark, searched the poems out in old files of the newspaper, O'Neill wrote to him urging: "I wish you would leave all this out... this stuff had no bearing on my later development. I never submitted a verse that was really close to me, that I had felt, to the *Telegraph*."

In rancorous retreat

By Robert Bernard Martin

RICHARD HAUSER COSTA
Edmund Wilson
Our Neighbor from Talbotville
173pp. Syracuse University Press. \$11.95.
0 8156 0163 8

Strung across the hills of "upstate" New York are Ithaca, Utica, Troy, Rome, Syracuse, Cortland, and Seneca Falls, and Hamlet, many of them still with "Greek revival" houses and churches, their names meaningless of the bright hopes for a new classical era in America at the end of the eighteenth century. Not far from Utica and Rome is the village of Talbotville, and to its handsome old stone family house there, that his mother had left to him, Edmund Wilson returned in the summers of the last two decades of his life in search of his origins, as if leaving the capital for his Sabine farm. During that time he felt the deepening disquiet with his own country that led to such unimpaired and ineffective outbursts as *The Cold War* and the *Journal* of *The Prince of the MLE*.

Like Matthew Arnold a century earlier, Wilson had spent much of his life trying to correct the innate literary provincialism of his countrymen, paradoxically he was now turning away from the American dream and looking for his roots in his own past.

the old house and his family traditions.

Richard Costa was a middle-aged journalist, recently turned to teaching, when he first met Wilson in 1963. He was planning a book about H. O. Wells and wanted quotations from Wilson to use in it. A year before, Wilson had declined to see him, but on this occasion he accompanied a reporter friend who had permission to interview him. This book is the record of the meetings and correspondence of Wilson and Costa until the former's death nine years later.

It was never an intimate friendship, as Costa is frank to admit, but from the first he apparently intended to make a book of it, since after each meeting with Wilson he would carefully set down everything he could remember. "I took no notes in Wilson's presence," he writes, "and would never have suggested the affront of a recording device", but on one occasion when Wilson thought he was talking privately to Costa's students, there was a shorthand reporter planted to take down every word, while a photographer surreptitiously snapped pictures.

It must have been in many ways a frustrating relationship for Costa, since he states that he has no feeling whatsoever for either genealogy or architecture, the two central concerns that had brought Wilson to Talbotville. And, in spite of his teaching in an English department, Costa's literary tastes, as he himself admits, were limited to Wells, Melville, and Melville Lowry. Wilson, Costa recalls how on several occasions his own wandering attention was caught again until Wilson stopped talking of



"Hand and Ear" (1928) by the American Photographer Brett Weston, is taken from Photography: Essays and Images, (320pp. Selter and Warburg. £17.95, paperback £7.95). This collection of "Illustrated Readings in the History of Photography", edited by Beaumont Newhall, was published this week and will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of the TLS.

'Yes, Doctor, I lie awake
There is no sleep
I suffer torments
'Here's a prescription,
A harmless barbiturate.
Your trouble is common enough:
It's the war.
Everyone has the jitters.'
Exit, bearing pills.

The reason why this is more satisfactory than any of the earlier verse is that here O'Neill has at last allowed his dialectical skills as a dramatist to invade the apocryphal territory of the poet. The doctor's wisdom qualifies the patient's self-pity, and both are caught up in a public contest that makes light of their troubles. Or does it? Jamie's self-indulgent, shallow irony works well enough in the play, where it has to contend with the more direct and even more direct of Mary and even Edmund. Without this peculiarly Irish balancing of opposites, however, the mood of the early poems seems as hollow, unvaried and (worst of all) exemplary. Everyone has heard of shallow optimism. Pessimism too can be unlearned, unjustified by experience.

books and reverted to gossip about writers. The result is a disconcerting picture of Wilson, as if his head were turned away from the camera and his mind elsewhere. We get a good bit about the women's census shows that he wore no walks, the Scotch he drank too freely, detailed menus of meals he never got around to eating, and offhand remarks about other writers, but little of the reined of the man who was often called America's last great poet.

At best Wilson was not extravagantly generous about his contemporaries, but some of the remarks preserved here make him seem more waspish than he was, since they were never intended to go beyond the room in which they were spoken. Costa tells how Wilson asked him never to quote what he had to say of Anthony West, but he does so in the next sentence. Other ill-considered remarks about living authors, not very revealing but still capable of wounding, are quoted without adding to our estimation of Wilson.

This is a sad little book, perhaps even sadder than his other known works, with its picture of an increasingly embittered Wilson alone in the house of his maternal forebears, which his children and the wife of his last marriage preferred not to visit, leaving him isolated as only those who live in rural America and do not drive can be. He was dependent upon companions who did not share his interests, in exchange for the privilege of hearing his pronouncements, he would risk for life in his care when he left the country for Utica or Rome. But he was the wrong Rome, and in Talbotville he had never found the Home that he had been seeking in his Sabine retreat.

As we would say

By E. S. Turner

NORMAN W. SCHUR
English English
332pp. Essex, Connecticut: Verbatim.
\$24.95.
0 930454 05 7

This guide for the use of Americans is an extended version of an earlier book, *British Self-Taught*, which American reviewers described as top-bolo, smashing, clicking and likely to have a good innings. The work of an "avocational lexicographer" who formerly practised law, it is informative, discursive, idiosyncratic, amused and amusing; but it ought to be labelled "Use With Great Care".

As a lawyer Norman Schur had to deal with authors who bridled at the encroaching of their work for the British reader, as by the substitution of stone for rock, parcel for package. Publishers' contracts, he says, call for the American author's consent to this process, "and it works the other way round as well". British authors are liable to find their American presentation copies sprinkled with faucets, closets, sneakers and taffy.

It is in the interest of wages, and perhaps of lexicographers, to pretend that the British and the Americans are sunders by a common language. During the Second World War, this book reminds us, an Anglo-American misunderstanding at high level over a single word resulted in "long and acrimonious argument" (Churchill's phrase). The Americans held that to table meant to defer consideration, the British that it meant to bring up for immediate discussion. There are well-known pitfalls in the computing of millions and the method of counting floors in a building; and a glossary is indispensable when we come to the names of motor-car parts. However, in ordinary daily exchanges honest bafflement is rare.

"In general," says Mr Schur, "it appears that American expressions are easier for Britons than the other way round". How, he asks, is an uninitiated American to know that a gram is a baby carriage? (Carry-over is easier.) Or is obviously a portable basketball? One could retort that it is an uninitiated Englishman to know that a waxed-dinner jacket? But an American would need to be as dim as a Tox H lamp if a British expression meaning thick-headed, now "on the way out" to suppose that a first-class family butcher catered only for first-class families, though it makes a serviceable party joke.

It is just as hard to believe that "Britons are shocked to see the sign NO HONKING as a warning to motorists on New York streets" (supposedly, they associate

honking with vomiting, or in America, throwing up). Even more strangely, Mr Schur claims that an invitation to do the dishes, meaning to wash up, "would confuse a Briton no end". This is because in Britain regards dishes as serving plates for which reason he would not refuse to do a dishwasher (American) was a washing machine. What, then, does a dishwasher mean to a Briton? The answer, apparently, is a water wastrel.

Mr Schur has been moving in odd circles. He tells us that thermos laces is English for blowtorch; that while the American says an undertaker (or, euphemistically, mortician) the British say funeral director (the British, of course, reluctantly changed undertaker for funeral director); and that while the Americans refer to an 8000 anniversary the British call it an octogenary (this clumsy word is in our dictionaries, but so is octocentenary, which English English does not mention).

Mr Schur is careful to point out that not all his usages are current; some are for the benefit of Americans reading the English literature of yesterday. "I would rather risk the misdeed of inclusion than the felony of omission", he says. The difficulty for the user may be to know whether an expression is current, passed or obsolete, since such guidance is not always given. It is heard in British factories "what the boss is approaching, but when was it last shouted by the lads at British Leyland? And when did the last Lancashire say "I'm slated" as an admission that her pilot was showing? (A slated has slipped down out of place—get it?)

However, one is grateful for the information that the word sewer to describe an obnoxious person comes from the Hades-plant *sew*, for pig. So that is where Under the names of motor-car parts. However, in ordinary daily exchanges honest bafflement is rare.

As an anglophile Mr Schur is keen to explain all about institutions like pubs and fish and chips, but he should know that fish has long been illegal to wrap tied fish directly in newspaper. He is not worried. For example, he wonders, as we might, why we call public relations men public relations officers. His is rightly shocked by our use of the word redundancy, with its "unfortunate imagery of superfluity". And sometimes he notes British habits which the British themselves may scarcely have observed, like the way a shopkeeper to up her customer's purchase with a slight movement of the lips "and then turns to you brightly and announces the result with eyes opened wide and a rising intonation, as though indicating surprise and apology for the unpleasant tidings". This is good observation. To use an expression not often heard in British, Ajaboy!

PAUL MORAND:
Chronique du XX^e siècle
L'Europe gaule, Boudha vivait,
Maguelone, Les Champions du Monde
466pp. Paris: Grasset.
2 246 25331 4.
JEAN-FRANÇOIS FOGEL:
Morand-Express
251pp. Paris: Orosset.
2 246 25351 9.

Paul Morand's writing is a part now of the early 1920s. His name evokes Bugatti cars, Paris jazz-clubs, Victorian gentlemen ageing gracefully in London clubs, American flappers, bankrupt German businessmen and, for a final dose of exotism, the first snows of revolutionary Russia. The heroines of his early stories fit from capital to capital and make passionate love in luxury hotels. They seem to have turned out badly but that does not matter because, as one of them says, Europe itself has turned out badly.

Morand did not invent the theme that modern sensibility is mobile and fragmented, he inherited it from a writer whom he admired—Valéry Larbaud. In the years before 1914 Larbaud wrote mock-heroic poems about the Orient Express, came to England to buy hats at Lock's and lyricized about Edwardian opulence in the ironic refrain: "Tomorrow, oh my soul, all the ships will be open". The experience that recurs in Larbaud's *Journal de Barnabooth* is the moment before the luxury train arrives in London or Paris. The joy of anticipation is so intense that it turns into pain and, since neither Bond Street nor the rue de la Paix can appease his anguish, Barnabooth sets off for Rome or Madrid. The search for what was new and fleeting led Larbaud to write about adolescence, and to create in *Les Enfantines* precocious teenage heroines who run the gamut of erotic fantasies.

Although he was only seven years younger than Larbaud, Morand looked back at the ennobled world which had been destroyed in 1914. What remained for him, he felt, was the anguish of modernity without the joy. *Chronique du XX^e siècle* reprints four of his earlier books, one of which, *L'Europe Gaule* (1925), is a series of sketches about modern love. Three women describe the men they love: these men seem to have nothing in common yet they turn out to be the same man. Again, a man who is in love with a woman seduces another woman who resembles her. Morand's characters invent love-objects quite different from the people whom they supposedly love. Experience crumbles, his characters turn looking for fresh loves which invariably turn out to be mirages and the heady passions of *Les Enfantines* are replaced by emptiness.

The feeling of a dream is also the subject of his *Champions du monde* (1930). In 1909 four young Americans are leaving university. Since they are athletic, handsome and talented, the world promises them much. Twenty years later one has been driven to suicide, another is a bored dilettante, the third an exhausted, puritanical diplomat and the fourth has fled to the Soviet Union where he is, we are to hope, living happily ever after. All of them have been ruled by American women, before whom Morand feels a trembling awe. The dilettante, Van Norden, lives out a silent, expatriate life dominated by his mollier.

In *Morand-Express* Jean-François Fogel tells us that Morand is always in flight, scurrying from country to country and from woman to woman. So elusive is the author Fogel

can never catch him. Instead of writing a biography or a critical study he offers us a record of his long, fruitless pursuit of his subject. He has collected photographs of Morand, visited the many cities where he lived and chatted to his mistresses. Yet he has learnt nothing about him and the subject of his book is an absent silence, a "non-Morand".

One wonders whether a critic should so assiduously emulate his author. There may be an emptiness in Morand's writing but does that constitute a reason for Fogel to write such an empty book? Surely a critic should set up a dialogue with his author, should struggle with him. Such a critic would have noticed what Fogel ignores: that Morand's work is dreadfully repetitious. Innumerable cosmopolitan love stories, where only the décor varies, all prove that human beings cannot make contact. The characters are shallow because Morand is not sufficiently interested in them to take them seriously, while the plots move predictably to their gloomy conclusions. Larbaud had understood that the glittering fragment of experience should be allowed to hang in its void, and that a writer who kept lamenting the emptiness of the modern world risked becoming a bore. Although the stories of Morand's *Magie noire* (1928) juxtapose Southern plantations, Haiti and the Congo, the characters all behave in the same way. Blacks, Morand tells us, inevitably revert to the jungle; a black American doctor goes to a museum of African art and regresses into an animal. A black American woman who travels to Africa ends up as the wife of a native.

Larbaud had stressed that cultures resemble one another, but Morand is convinced that cultures are fundamentally different and that "the twentieth-century's only crime of passion will be racial wars". In *Boudha vivait* (1927) he depicts a Frenchman, Renaud, who visits the East, learns nothing from it and ends up as a chauffeur driving a Bugatti in on Asian principles. The prince who employs him is inspired by Renaud to visit the West, where he too learns nothing, tries to convert the French to Buddhism and almost dies of starvation.

Morand's eusmopolitanism led him back to a crude nationalism. He believed that France was already losing the medal war. Jazz was the weapon which the mongrel hordes were using to penetrate Europe; American saxophonists were the enemy's cavalry, and behind them came the army of foreign immigrants: Asians spreading Buddhism, refugees from Eastern Europe who were Bolshevik spies, and so on. Meanwhile the French were embracing their conquerors as if in a suicidal frenzy: "never before had a nation just vanquished under its own soil, as it through a traitor". His own wife, Hélène Souza, came from the East, as it happens: Princess Souza was rich, Romanian, snobbish, ambitious and fascist. Morand himself came from a family which had lived for a long time in Russia and he was a career-diplomat. Despite, or because of this, he was obsessed with his vision of destruction: European life, he declared, is "a death without peace, a death which is still a struggle... it is a strangled cry, an interrupted blasphemy".

Naturally, Morand was antisemitic. In the books he wrote in the 1920s the Jew appears in his usual roles of foreigner, betrayer and insidious immigrant who was able to disguise himself as English banker, Russian revolutionary or even progressive Catholic.

The Jew is both victim and executioner. One of the stories in *Champion du monde* (1922)

Dusty Answer

Staring into dust of TV race track.
The rener almost blinded of the curve.
It was the curve of the earth,
No matter who would win or lose.

Staring into dust.
Of a storm system developing in tornado.
Another kind of indeterminate looking.
From which one might be alive or dead.

Staring into the dust of a sarcophagus.
Sny Egyptian, three thousand years old.
Was he of all, supposedly mere.
Like looking at my own hand.

Richard Eberhart

The anguish of modernity

By Patrick McCarthy

describes a pogrom in Hungary, while in *Les Champions du monde* the Jew, Nadine, first destroys her husband and then rises to become a duchess, her husband having proclaimed that he could not be a part of American society because he was Jewish, that he had "a sick mind in a sick body" and that he carried poison with him at all times because he was fascinated by suicide.

In the preface to *Ouveri la nuit* Morand compares himself with the Jew, his fellow-cosmopolitan, a well-documented trait among gentiles, who faced their own fears. Terrified by his vision of a bankrupt Europe, Morand blames it on the Jew rather than take any responsibility for it himself. Another theme common to so much French anti-Semitism is the fear of women, especially blonde, Aryan women. In *Boudha vivait* the prince suffers his final defeat at the hands of a New Yorker, Rosemary, a "tall beautiful Aryan angel" who is initially tempted by the East but later feels for the prince "a terror which rises up from the depths of her race". In general, Morand's heroes, who seem like triumphant Don Juans, are weak when confronted by women and their resentment of this weakness is transmuted into hatred of the Jew, which allows them to assert their equality with the Aryan goddesses who despise them.

In the 1930s Morand grew even more antisemitic. In 1934 he published *France la Douce*, a banal racist novel about Jewish refugees from Germany who take over the French film industry which displays more than a merely superficial, social anti-Semitism. His nostalgia for Barnabooth's Europe misled him and prevented him from understanding his own age.

He demonstrated his incomprehension by his comically stupid actions in 1940. He had always been a reluctant diplomat who had spent years on leave from the Quai d'Orsay, but in 1940 he was working in London with an Anglo-French group of civil servants overseeing the blockade of German industry. When France fell and De Gaulle made his speech of June 18, Morand hesitated. The Gaullists appealed to him for support but he refused to give it. He also refused Pétain's offer to remain in London as a representative of Vichy. Morand simply deserted his post. Bewildered by the Nazi victories he decided that a defeated France was better than a blitzed London. He returned to France via neutral Portugal and remained a private citizen for the next three years. Encouraged by his appalling wife, he flaunted his pro-German sympathies and duly received his reward. In 1938 he had applied for promotion to the rank of ambassador, but the Quai d'Orsay had then refused, citing his long leaves of absence. Now Vichy made him ambassador to Romania, where his wife had both contacts and property. By the time he arrived in Bucharest in July 1943 it was obvious that the Germans were losing the war, and Morand's chief concern became to escape from Bucharest before the Red Army marched in. In the summer of 1944 he managed to get himself appointed ambassador to neutral Switzerland, a post he occupied for all of three weeks.

When De Gaulle liberated Paris, Morand sent him a telegram of congratulation and offered to remain as ambassador in Bern. But the gesture came four years too late. The Liberation authorities sacked Morand, who prudently remained in Switzerland rather than return to face the purge in Paris. After several years of exile and of bitter innuendoes for his ruined career he sneaked back into France, where he lived until the

ripe old age of 88, dying in 1976.

Morand also had another ambition, which was to become a member of the French Academy. In 1959 it looked as if he might be elected but by now De Gaulle was back in power. In a gloriously autocratic gesture the unforgiving General reminded the Academicians that he was their protector and announced that he would veto Morand. The immortals howled in protest but De Gaulle paid no attention. Nine years later he relented and Morand entered the Academy. Fogel makes claims for the books which Morand wrote in the years after 1944, but he is not convincing and one feels that Morand will be remembered for two things: for early books like *Tendres Stocks* (1921), and *Ouveri la nuit* and *Ferme la nuit* (1923) and such travel books as *New York* (1929) and *Loulies* (1933).

New York is inspired by the pan-stricken exhilaration which the city inspires in Morand; it is a book about a dream and a nightmare. He admires the aristocratic families who created the city—the Stuyvesants and the Van Cortlandts, the Vanderbilts and the Goulds. He relishes the elegant houses on Washington Square but cannot forget that the men who built them were robber barons. Protestants and capitalists of industry in comparison with whom a French writer feels unsure of himself. Modern New York overwhelms Morand: the skyscrapers are too high, the *NY Times* is too heavy, the Broadway lights are "epileptic" and thousands of animals have been butchered to make the fur coats which are draped around the elegant, inaccessible women of Fifth Avenue. Morand the cosmopolitan is delighted by New York but Morand the traditionalist is appalled. Sometimes his discomfort is comical: he spends hours looking for an "authentic" black jazz-club in Harlem and gulps down huge, unwanted steaks in bleak self-service restaurants.

London also frightens Morand. In 1933 the streets are full of hunger-marchers and tramps, while the newspapers issue gloomy prophecies of economic disaster. Morand

looks back to late-Victorian and Edwardian London, which he half-remembers and half-invents. When he first came here in 1903, English puritanism so impressed him that he did not dare take photographs on a Sunday because he thought it was forbidden. Yet he enjoyed the ceremony of the city. He talks of Victoria's coronation as empress of India and of her funeral, when the Smithfield butchers draped their meat in black crepe.

Morand inherited the theme of London from Larbaud; both writers declared that their favourite spot here was Chelsea—around Old Church Street, where Larbaud sets his novel *Beauté n'est beau souci*. But where Larbaud was unimpressed by English men, to whom he preferred very young English girls, Morand is fascinated by public-schools, cricket-fields and the London clubs where gentlemen read *The Times* in dignified silence.

Morand was frequently overawed and it is this shyness rather than the kitsch of the early 1920s which explains why his first books are his best. *Tendres Stocks* is a portrait of three women seen by a young man who cannot understand much less possess them. They are not especially beautiful or intelligent; they are unknowable. The narrator has met Delphine, for instance, as a child, when she was haughty and snubbed him; now she is debauched and fatalistic and he cannot explain the change. Morand's quite modest originality lies in having the story told by a narrator who is himself surprised by it. In *Ouveri la nuit* the young heroes spend most of their nights alone because their lady-friends have deserted them: one has been arrested for spreading revolution, while others have run off with cyclists or black clairvoyants. The disconnected narrators are left to piece together their half-finished stories. By the time he wrote *Boudha vivait* Morand was starting to talk about this fragmentation instead of continuing to allow it to shape his fiction, but his earliest books end on a question which continues to intrigue us sixty years after they were written.

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Blood-sucking brigade

By A.N. Wilson

JAMES B. TWITCHELL:
The Living Dead
A study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature
219pp. Durham, North Carolina: Duke
University Press. \$14.75.
0 822 0438 4

Cases of vampirism may be said to be in our time a rare occult phenomenon. Yet whether we are justified in supposing that they are less frequent today than in past centuries I am far from certain. One thing is plain: not that they do not occur but that they are carefully hushed up and stifled.

So wrote Montague Summers, the leading English authority on the subject, in *The Vampire in Europe* (1929). Since his day, the vampires have been so successful at hushing up their nocturnal operations that many of us would be hard put to it to name more than a handful of young virgins in our acquaintance who have been bothered by thirsty visits from the living dead.

Vampires, as Montague Summers implied, come and go. There are far more in Hungary, for example, than have ever been spotted in England. And the eighteenth century was much better off for them than the seventeenth or the twentieth. Herbert Mayo, in *On Trilts Condemned in Popular Superstitions*, tells of a vampire dug up in Belgrade in 1732. When disinterred it leaped to one side, the skin was fresh and ruddy, the nails grown long and evilly crooked, the mouth spattered with blood from its last night's repast. Accordingly a stake was driven through the chest of the vampire who uttered a terrible screech which blood poured in quantities from the wound. Then it was burned to ashes. Moreover, a number of other persons throughout the district had been infected with vampirism. Of the facts there can be no question whatsoever — the documents are above suspicion, and in particular the most important of these, which were signed by three regimental surgeons, and formally counter-signed by a lieutenant-colonel and sub-lieutenant.

The Belgrade vampire is one of many collected in Montague Summers' first book on the subject, *The Vampire: His Kith and Kin* (1928). It is a disturbing work, as Summers shows, the evil effects of the vampire extend far beyond their immediate victims. As well as the living dead (their ectoplasmic escaping through holes in their graves and assuming bodily shape once above ground) there are of course the initiators: those who have not yet died and therefore have no excuse for their unwholesome tastes. Summers recounts in punctilious detail the story of Peter Harman of Hannover, who was beheaded on April 15, 1925. Harman was homosexual and his victims were exclusively adolescent boys. At least twenty of them were named at the trial. He killed them by biting their throats and then supplemented his income by selling their flesh at a butcher's shop near the railway station in Hannover. It will never be known how many of the "mannliche Prostitution" of Hannover's red-light district ended up in Harman's apparently very palatable sausages. But all had died, according to the coroner, in the same way. "The violent oroticism, the fatal bite in the throat, are typical of the vampire," Summers bellowed, with Flaubertian bluntness. "The motive of sexual murder is nearly always to shed blood and not to cause death."

Sadly believable as that may be, what of the vampire in the more comfortable confines of poetry, drama and the novel? It is striking, again as Summers observed, how little there is of the vampire in literature. German superstition is full of tales of blood-sucking. And it was German superstition, very largely, which fired the imagination of "Monsieur" Lewis to a slightly lesser extent the much richer imagination of Charles Maturin. They conceived, between them, of almost every horror which a haunted Gothic castle, or a Spanish convent riddled with skeletons, or a graveyard at midnight could provide. Blandly, judiciously, almost reverently they wrote; but they did not choose to write about vampires. It was not until 1819, indeed, when John Polidori published *The Vampire*, that the book began to have its life in English fiction. Polidori had created it from Byron, whose publisher, John Murray, indignantly refused the original as an unpublished frag-

ment in the same year. Neither is particularly good.

The first really extended treatment of the theme is *Variety the Vampire* (1847), a work which makes Bulwer Lytton's novels seem like models of concision and realism. Nominally by Thomas Peckett Prest, it is a work of composite authorship, well over 800 pages long. If you happen to possess a copy of the long unobtainable first edition, hang on to it. It has been reprinted only in our own generation (New York: Arno Press 1970, and Dorset Publications 1973). Few today will have read the whole of *Variety the Vampire* and few, in spite of its promising title, will want to. It is one of the many helpful things about James B. Twitchell's book *The Living Dead* that it contains an appendix summarizing the plot of this now forgotten best-seller. No mean feat.

After *Variety the Vampire*, you might think, there is not much to look forward to until Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and, of course, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. But you would be wrong; or so Twitchell would have you believe. You have forgotten about the *Lyrical Ballads*, *The Cent*, *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, all that stuff.

Carmilla is a sublimely unwholesome little story about an innocent girl called Laura trapped in her father's Gothic castle with another girl who appears to be her son of age. This is *Carmilla*. She has come to the castle as a result of a coach accident and quickly develops a passion for the innocent Laura. Laura, who narrates the tale, is disturbed by *Carmilla*'s intensity. "With glowing eyes she drew me to her, and her hot lips travelled along my cheeks in kisses; and she would whisper, almost in sobs, 'You are mine, you shall be mine, and you and I are one forever.'" The poor girl does not feel safe, and even when asleep, "sometimes it was as if warm lips kissed me, and longer and more lovingly as they reached my throat, but there the caress fixed itself. My heart beat faster, my breathing rose until a sense of strangulation supervened, and turned into a dreadful convulsion, in which my senses left me, and I became unconscious."

There is, as Twitchell says, something unmistakably sexual about *Carmilla*'s advances. Even when it has been established that she is really a lamia, one Countess Carmesin, whose bloodied corpse, when dug up, is found floating in its coffin in seven inches of blood, we find it hard to forget the character of her initial overtures to the virginal young Laura. What Le Fanu is doing, according to Twitchell, is unfolding "the nature of the vampire myth." So far so good. But James B. Twitchell is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Florida. And the sense that there is something erotically fascinating about the figure of the vampire is fairly unintellectual and unilluminating. So what can we do with it? How about suggesting that what Le Fanu is offering us in the blood-curdling story of *Carmilla* is a reading of Coleridge's *Christabel*?

This is the kind of odd perception which creeps into the heads of those who are paid to read English literature. But, one must say, Twitchell handles it wittily. How is it undisturbed by the fact that *Christabel* does not suck *Christabel*'s blood. The assembly of evidence is after all strong: "the midnight hour, the full moon, the spectral appearance of *Christabel*, the importance of *Christabel*'s touch, *Christabel*'s invitation to the castle, *Christabel*'s fainting at the threshold, her refusal to pray, the old man's growing acknowledgement of an evil presence" — the list is long. No one would deny that there is something rather sinister about *Christabel*. But one starts to wonder, as Twitchell's list proceeds, whether all supernatural happenings at a midnight hour, all growings of mistle, must point to the presence of a vampire.

In Mr Twitchell's library, though, there are vampires everywhere you look. He has set out in long traces of the vampire in Romantic literature and where vampires are not apparent, he assumes they must be hidden. Obviously, if it's *Keats's Lamia* that you have got down from the shelf, you're in luck. But less of a case can be made for *The Leech-Gatherer*. Wordsworth dated it in the 1807 version; the scene beginning "He wore a cloak like mine as women wear."

As one whose blood did seep from his forehead, he had grown pale, his face looked pale as if it had grown pale. It is possible that he did so because the lines are not much good. But if you are willing a

thesis about vampires, things are less simple than that. Admittedly it is the Leech-gatherer who is being drained of blood, rather than the reverse. So it is that the artist gives energy, by allowing the perceiver to leech from the strength of his perception, his art. The idea is an analogy of Christ, the Eucharist, Poetry itself.

Some readers will feel that Twitchell's amusing survey is spoiled by this stuff. Others will take the point of view that no book can be taken seriously unless it tries to be both critical and comprehensive. Even *Beowulf* is enlisted here in the literature of vampirism — more convincingly (to me) than *The Leech-Gatherer*. In the old poem there are at least humanoid monsters who feast on human flesh.

The simple fact to emerge from this book is that vampires are, in literature at least, better explicit than hushed up or stifled. Twitchell is not absurd in all his speculations. There is vampire imagery in some of the pages of Edgar Allan Poe, and I am convinced by Twitchell's reading of *Women in Love* that D. H. Lawrence was heavily into vampires. "He wanted to give everything to her, all his blood; to the last drops, pour away everything to her." *The Living Dead* was an investigation worth making, and it shows (with varying credibility) that a lot of people from Southey to Lawrence had vampires on their minds. But there are surely simple lessons to be learned from the fact that no writer has ever written more brilliantly about vampires than Bram Stoker, no critic more searchingly than the Reverend Montague Summers.

Speaking for the dumb

By Stephen Gill

SHEILA M. SMYTH:
The Other Nation
The Poor in English Novels of the 1840s and 1850s
282pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press. £12.
0 19 82642 5

In 1845, the celebrated political diarist Charles Greville followed the current fashion for sightseeing trips to the industrial North. In his specially appointed barge "fitted up with every convenience and comfort... drawn by two horses with postillions to livery", his party spectacularly displayed the gap between the two Nations. His journal reveals it shatteringly clearly. Visiting coalmines, factories, and model schools Greville saw a great deal but understood little. "On Wednesday I went through the subterranean canal... into the colliery, saw the working in the mine, and came up by the shaft; a black and dirty expedition, scarcely worth the trouble, but which I am glad to have made. The colliers seem a very coarse set, but they are not hard worked, and, in fact, do no more than they choose." The miners, women and children who gave evidence to the 1842 Commission of Enquiry into employment in the mines saw things quite differently. The gap between experience, seeing and understanding is the subject of this book.

More attention has been given to English novels of the 1840s and 1850s than they might be thought to merit. Mary Barton, Sybil, Alan Watts, *It is Never Too Late to Mend*, *Hard Times* cannot compare with *Vanity Fair*, *Bleak House*, *Middlemarch* or *The Portrait of a Lady* as works of art, and yet they have engaged such scholars as Louis Cazamian, Kathleen Tillotson, Raymond Williams, Peter Keating and Steven Marcus. It is easy to see why. Compared with Henry James, say, whose novels are all impure — *Gosford Park*, submitted to the dulles of a clergyman's wife, *Daisy*, a politician on the social register, *Portrait* an active clergyman and lawyer, Dickens's public figure and literary entrepreneur — and to give their fictions, love interest and prophetic insight, the legislation, the optimistic and the pessimistic, the "real" world. And yet there is a raw power, a directness, a sense of



These drawings by Barnett Freedman are part of a series of forty-eight he produced for an edition of Oliver Twist, published in 1939, and for sale at Sotherby's in London on March 26 and 27. The sale, of English illustrated books and related drawings and woodcuts, includes volumes illustrated by Beardsley, Burne-Jones, Dicks, Rackham, Blake, Ricketts, Palmer, John and Paul Nash, Wyndham Lewis, Doré and Max Beerbohm; and many pen and ink drawings (among them literary caricatures) by Nicola Bentley, whose "Rossetti" appears on the cover of this issue.

challenge about them all which makes it easy for the general reader to forgive their faults. If Keats and Kingsley are little read now, *Mary Barton* and *Hard Times* are certainly current and even *Sybil* is back in print in paperback. Survival from among the many other documents of their age has even conferred representative status on them, so that for many students of literature *Mary Barton* and *Alan Watts*, and *Trades Unionism* means what is depicted in *North and South* and *Hard Times*.

The images these texts present are clearly not neutral or accurately representational and their survival must infuriate historians trying to make sense of masses of apparently hard evidence. Yet their very formation, and their success in their own time, must tell us something about what and how the mid-Victorians saw or thought they saw. This is Sheila Smyth's contention, and her book is the most rigorous and impressive attempt yet to ask the right questions and to bring together the appropriate evidence. It must be read by everyone interested in the period.

To those literary critics who proclaim the death of the author, or those who maintain that the relation between the outside world and the work of art is not a fruitful subject for consideration, Sheila Smyth's procedures will seem very old-fashioned. She believes that we can get close to the lived experience of the 1840s and 1850s and establish evidence against which to test the images of the written text. Parliamentary Reports on industry, agriculture, prison conditions, public health; eye-witness accounts in documents, letters and newspapers; photographs and paintings: all are brought together in testimony both to the conditions in which the poor lived and worked and to their attitudes to their lot. Dr Smyth is too good a historian to trust this public evidence as if because it is avowedly non-imaginative, it must be free from bias or selection, but unlike most literary scholars she has immersed herself in it, and the results are fascinating.

Fascinating and rather depressing. Sheila Smyth's question is, "Can these middle-class novelists concerned with commenting on the two Nations in their society, extend their consciousness, to include the life of the other Nation, so that their readers imaginatively experience it?" Generally the answer is no. Their achievements, and very considerable, "create an image of St Olney which outlasts its original and determines how

Shuffling down the back-stairs

By Paul Kennedy

DAVID DILKS (Editor):
Retreat from Power
Studies in Britain's Foreign Policy of the Twentieth Century
Volume 1: 1906-1939
221pp. 0 333 28909 9.
Volume 2: After 1939
197pp. 0 333 29319 3.
Macmillan, £10 each (paperback, £4.25).

Eighty years ago, on January 22, 1901, the "old Queen" died peacefully in her sleep at Osborne. With her went the age to which she had lent her name. The early parts of Victoria's long reign had seen Britain uninvolved in world affairs, as the pre-eminent industrial, commercial, naval and colonial power, the country had possessed no international influences out of all proportion to the size of its population and its territorial extent. By the beginning of this century, however, the era of the *Pax Britannica* had gone forever. Rising now powers like Germany and the United States had overtaken Britain in many industrial and technological spheres. Colonial rivals threatened various parts of the British Empire. The Royal Navy's maritime supremacy had been ceded in certain seas, and was under pressure in others. In sum, the

special circumstances which once made Britain the number one state had disappeared; the wheel of fortune, never still, was carrying the nation downward, away from the zenith of power.

It is this downward course, or trajectory, which is measured by the contributors to the two volumes of *Retreat from Power*, edited by David Dilks. It should be made clear at the outset, however, that this work is not attempting to explain the British decline. The eluster of economic, cultural, geopolitical and domestic causes of the collapse of British power which has been analysed by Corelli Barnett, Max Beloff, Bernard Porter and this reviewer, among others, is not directly on the agenda here. These two volumes consist instead of fourteen essays on particular aspects of British external policy; they are, as the subtitle indicates, "Studies in Britain's Foreign Policy of the Twentieth Century". Five of the essays have appeared in print before, though in a slightly different form; the rest are unpublished papers given at the University of Leeds, where the editor holds his chair. The contributors range from lecturers in Dilks's department to outside authorities such as Michael Howard and the late Lord Strang.

One may snipe at, or praise individual pieces but, because this is a somewhat heterogeneous collection, it is difficult to engage with it as a whole. In fact, all of the contributions are of high quality and offer useful information, but some appear less

connected than others with the "Retreat from Power" theme. For example, Philip Taylor's thoughtful piece on how the Foreign Office's attitudes to the press and public changed during the First World War, Graham Ross's detailed analysis of Churchill's visit to Moscow in August, 1942, and — a curious addition, surely — Sarvepalli Gopal's sympathetic study of "Nehru and the Commonwealth".

Certain of the other pieces deal with specific short-term crises in British diplomacy: thus, W. N. Medlicott offers a reasoned and plausible explanation for that much execrated pact, the Hoare-Laval pact of 1935; and Lord Strang contributes a personal memoir and a historical analysis of the ill-fated British mission to Moscow in the summer of 1939. Of the rest, the themes are broader and are concerned in a very central way with some of the chief issues in British external policy since Victoria's death.

Curiously, only one contribution deals with that policy prior to the Great War: Keith Wilson's fine essay on "Britain in the European Balance 1906-1914". Although I disagree with Wilson's argument that it was chiefly through a desire to avoid antagonizing Russia and France that the British government decided on war in 1914 — since the evidence for that intention is examined primarily from a few Russianophile Foreign Office clerks — this piece does bring home the increasing British fear of standing alone in a hostile world. Gone forever, it appears,

was the old belief in "splendid isolation".

By the following decade, the Cabinet had more to worry about than the sullenness of the Irish or the sensitivity of the Afrikaners. Revisionist, militaristic powers were on the move, threatening British interests in the Far East, in the Mediterranean and, most ominous of all, in Europe itself. In view of the gravity of these issues, it is not surprising that there is a concentration of essays upon the 1930s. Reprinted here is Professor Medlicott's careful Creighton lecture on Anglo-German diplomacy between 1930 and 1937; and this is complemented by Michael Howard's brilliant and lucid survey of "British Military Preparations for the Second World War".

All criticisms of appeasement, Howard reminds the reader, have to be set against the three overriding determinants of official British policy at that time: the requirements of imperial defence, that is, the need to preserve an over-stretched global system of possessions and interests; the widespread apprehension of Britain's own vulnerability to aerial attack, a consideration which of course had not troubled Palmerston's generation; and an acute awareness of the country's weakened economic circumstances, which meant that a heavy rearmament programme would lead to national bankruptcy. The Britain which had to face the challenge of the dictators was resembling, now more than ever, Joseph Chamberlain's 1902 description of "the weary Titan, staggering under the too vast orb of its fate".

From 1939 onwards, and despite heroic efforts in the battlefields and in the factories, it was downhill all the way. Lord Strang provides many insights into the problems Britain faced, in his magisterial survey "War and Foreign Policy 1939-45"; but the true touchstone of the retreat from power lay less in the diplomatic field than in the harsher world of armaments, technology and resources. This world is deftly scrutinized in Margaret Gowing's essay "Britain, America and the Bomb", which shows how this country's lead in A-bomb research was steadily transferred to its much wealthier transatlantic partner without, however, any British government feeling that it could give up its own claim to possess an independent nuclear deterrent. The final essay, by Edward Spiers, neatly takes the story of "The British Nuclear Deterrent" to the present day and assembles the arguments for and against its continuance. In the view of Mrs Thatcher's government, the Polaris submarine (and its Trident successor) represents a last and therefore essential justification of Britain's claim to be regarded as an independent great power. To critics, the British deterrent lacks credibility and is a mere figleaf, masking the extent of the country's decline.

Professor Dilks's part in this scholarly volume deserves a special mention. To each volume he contributes an essay, a fascinating piece on "Assessment and Intelligence" in the first; and a most judicious and moving examination of the relationship between "Chamberlain and Churchill in 1940" in the second. More important still, he provides a lengthy introduction to both volumes which attempts to link the various essays and to "fill the gap" between them. It is difficult to see how this collection, because of its heterogeneity, could be used as a course textbook for undergraduates (even in its paperback version) or offered to the general reader as an overall survey of British foreign policy; but Dilks's two introductions are worth recommending to anyone interested in learning about this country's diplomacy in the post-Victorian age. And it makes one even more eager to see what he will have to say in his long-awaited biography of Neville Chamberlain, the man who, more than any other, faced the task of defending interests which were indefensible, and of preserving an Empire which was unprovable.

Taken on all, it is remarkable how gentle and regular the British retreat from power has been. The traumas which occurred were generally short-term and limited in extent: even the fall of Singapore, described by Churchill as "the greatest disaster in our history", was a regional and not a global defeat; and even the Suez crisis, much though it troubled the nation, could not compare with France's agony over Algeria.

There has been no invasion, no Hiroshima, no unconditional surrender, no sack of Rome; nor has there been any significant right-wing backlash at this steady, inexorable retreat. More than any other empire in its final throes, Britain has come closest to Tonybee's aphorism that a declining power is like an old man, shuffling down the back-stairs in his slippers as the rising powers ascend the front-stairs in their jack-boots.

Just why the decline was so relatively gentle and painless bears further investigation. In Max Beloff's words, "No doubt much of human history consists in the more or less grudging acceptance of the ineluctable; but even the degree of grace is a matter of some interest". Naturally, this is not the place to conduct such an investigation, although even at first glance Britain's insular geography and the stability of its social arrangements must take pride of place in any analysis of the cause. But all such general musings can only be substantiated, or modified, if we have further specific studies on the processes of British foreign-policy decision-making in this century; which in the final analysis, must be the ultimate justification for scholarly collections like this one.

Small is successful

By Edward N. Luttwak

MICHAEL CARVER:
War Since 1945
322pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £10.50.
0 291 73846 3

Brevity, otherwise so admirable a quality, is limited to the writing of sound military history. For it is a peculiarity of war itself that it unfolds in several distinct dimensions at once, and each of these must be given some attention if military history is to be written in the round: the tactical, dominated by the potential and the limitations of man and weapons as well as by all the particularities of terrain and context; the operational, where diverse forces are coordinated and schemes of warfare (eg, the blitzkrieg) conceived; the theatre-strategic where it is the whole territory which defines the field of view, and where it is the interplay of the totality of the forces employed in proximity that is the subject; and finally, the level of grand strategy, where political purposes, diplomatic arrangements and a host of institutional factors shape the action at the lower levels — while being affected by it — thus ultimately defining the outcome.

At each level it is quite different kinds of people who act, their perspectives are radically different and even their conceptions of the purpose of what they are doing may greatly diverge. Those who would wage war must achieve a tolerable harmony between these various dimensions — among which there is no natural order — or else they will lose overall, no matter how well they might perform at one level or another. And those who would write the history of conflicts must contend with each level in adequate degree, unless of course their purpose is only to supply a specialized, partial study, whether tactical, or operational, or theatre-strategic or grand strategy.

Field-Marshal Lord Carver's survey of diverse wars since 1945 (not all wars are covered) is not limited to partial studies of one dimension or another and it is much too brief to allow proper coverage of each relevant dimension of the conflicts he does write about. When the attempt is made to describe the Korean and Vietnam wars in fifty pages, and the fifty years of Arab-Israeli wars in a mere forty, it is not merely interesting that it is being so severely but rather the reality of one or another dimension of those conflicts.

Usually it is the operational dimension that is almost entirely missing and this is a pity, for it is the operational dimension that is the most important for the writer of a history of war. It is precisely at this level that the tactical and the strategic are most closely linked, and it is here that the most important innovations in warfare have taken place since 1945. In the operational dimension, the writer of a history of war would find the most interesting and useful material. It is here that the tactical and the strategic are most closely linked, and it is here that the most important innovations in warfare have taken place since 1945. In the operational dimension, the writer of a history of war would find the most interesting and useful material.

see tank battalions, artillery units etc, fighting much as they would have done in the Second World War, the innovations of 1973 for example emerge only in the operational dimension — where we are confronted for the first time by the great reversal whereby the plain infantry has become the scarce force on the battlefield, while the ordinary formation is removed or at least mechanized. It is of course in this context that the anti-tank missile attained such modest importance as it had in 1973, this being a rather specialized manifestation of a wider phenomenon: the new potential effectiveness of agile, light infantry in battlefields where most soldiers are preoccupied by the operation of complex machines of war made to fight on a smaller scale.

Similarly, it is rather technically not even tactically that the Soviet-style array of anti-aircraft forces came into its own but rather operationally — their effect being manifest not in the number of aircraft shot down but rather in the diminishing non-combat value of air forces so greatly absorbed by the need to avoid, evade or confound anti-aircraft defences. When exponents of air power point to the low percentage of aircraft lost to ground anti-aircraft weapons per number of sorties flown, in order to claim that tactical airpower is as powerful as ever, their case is unexceptionable tactically. But in the wider frame of the operational dimension of war, which it is no longer the duel of ground gun and missile versus aircraft that we look at, but rather the whole relationship of air power versus ground forces, it is clear that tactical air power is no longer the devastating hammer that it once was.

That is not, however, the end of the story because when we move up to the dimension of theatre-strategy we must recognize that tactical air power still exacts its price — precisely by constraining the enemy ground forces to remain under the protection of anti-aircraft defences. Much more fragile, even more costly and less mobile than the armoured or mechanized forces themselves, the array of anti-aircraft defences can only be staged forward step by step, so that an army thus protected is deprived of the crucial advantage of fluid dynamism in forward movement. Thus the technically impressive, tactically neutralized and aircraft forces are finally revealed as greatly restricted in value.

Such things cannot, however, be usefully discussed in a few pages. Lord Carver's accounts are in fact outlines of theatre-strategy with a few tactical observations thrown in, and some political commentary. India's wars with China and Pakistan, and French colonial warfare in Indo-China and Algeria are somewhat more usefully treated than Korea, Vietnam and the Arab-Israeli wars, but on the whole Lord Carver's text is too prolix and short of detail to serve for quick reference, and much too scant for proper military history.

But perhaps the reader will feel sufficiently rewarded by the first hundred pages

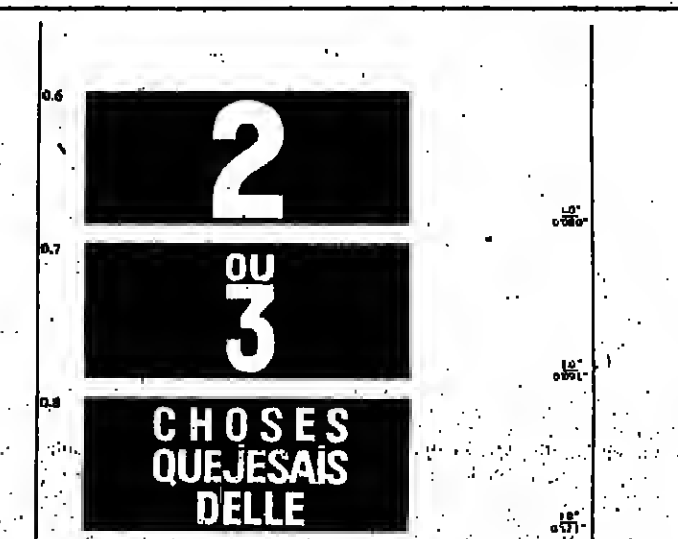
to forgive the rest. In these, Lord Carver reviews the small and very small wars of the British Empire in devolution: Palestine, Malaysia, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden and Borneo. Here briefly serves a positive use instead of prohibiting a serious study since the con-joint treatment it allows offers the illuminating perspective of one episode on another, without preventing the author from examining the different dimensions that demand attention, from the tactical to the political, since all these wars were so small in scale.

But they were by no means small in their effects on the contemporary world, nor in their importance as examples of the art of war. Indeed, the military planner who thinks of today's extra-European contingencies in the Persian Gulf or elsewhere has probably more to learn from the British experience than from the American. The airborne cavalry of Vietnam dwarfed in scale the British use of helicopters in Borneo, but it was in Borneo and not in Vietnam that this vehicle opened the way for radically new tactics in jungle warfare. One cannot help thinking that it was the sheer abundance of American resources which discouraged tactical innovation in Vietnam, while it was the scarcity of British means that made it compulsory in Borneo and elsewhere.

If Western soldiers once again have to go into action in that part of the world one hopes that they will do so with the self-confident skill and downright tactical elegance of most of the British troops who fought guerrillas in the Protectorate and terrorists in the town of Aden. The army that fought so well in Aden did so with the full advantages of the prior experience of fighting revolt in Cyprus, just as the earlier lessons of Kenya and Malaya had done much to prepare the army for the struggle against Grivas and his men. The good fortune which empowers especially need if their subjects should not revolt simultaneously if revolt they must, and matters were greatly helped by the fact that the Irgun and Haganah, the Malayan communists, the Mau Mau, Eoka, Sukarno and the two groups of South Arabian troublemakers, FIOY and NLF, all scheduled their appointments with British soldiers, "spooks" and policemen in neat sequence instead of erupting all at once.

Fortune being allowed for, it remains clear that except in Palestine the British did very well indeed with various blends of carefully controlled (and restrained) police work, good and sometimes inspired intelligence, fire-troop counter-terrorist methods and, above all, a great deal of first-class infantry training, backed on a small scale by RAF and Navy support. There is no doubt much to be learned from British colonial and post-colonial policy (especially when it was actually the business of the Foreign rather than the Colonial Office), but any fair-minded assessment of British colonial warfare since 1945 must be very positive: it was highly effective, very economical, and remarkably humane by the standards of the age.

But perhaps the reader will feel sufficiently rewarded by the first hundred pages



Two or Three Things I know about Her
Analysis of a Film by Godard
ALFRED GUZZETTI

2 ou 3 choses que je sais d'elle (1967) is, in Alfred Guzzetti's view, Godard's most complex and powerful work. Guzzetti not only provides a close analysis of Godard's themes and techniques but devises a novel format for presenting the film. The simultaneity of impression so characteristic of film is conveyed more successfully than ever before in a work of film criticism; the spoken text is given in English as well as French. *Harvard Film Studies*, 280 halftones, 7 line illustrations. March 1981, £16.50.

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commentary

Filling the gaps

By Celina Fox

Recent Acquisitions since 1976
British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings.

Prints and drawings rarely make the headlines as major purchasing coups. They are quietly slipped into mounts and stowed away in slender boxes, only to emerge for examination, according to the strict standards set by conservation experts, with the minimum of light for the briefest of time. So there is a sense of discovery in seeing what the Department of Prints and Drawings of the British Museum has been up to over the past five years, and the results are impressive.

As befits one of the great study collections of the world, many additions throw light on the artist's working method. Preparatory drawings for Italian masterpieces — ranging from careful studies of single figures and drapery to scribbled shorthand schemata for whole frescoes — are helpfully accompanied by photographs of the finished works. There are rare and even previously unknown stories of sixteenth and seventeenth-century North European prints. Nor has the field of design for the decorative arts been overlooked. A small mid-sixteenth-century South German pocket book is filled with intricate pen designs for jewellery. Jean Pillement's pretty ornamental Chinese arabesques and stylized flowers, etched by his second wife and printed in colour from two plates, are indicative of the artist's role in the diffusion of the rococo style throughout Europe. From the nineteenth century, the acquisition of over 1,000 lithographs by Gavarni, including annotated proofs before publication, constitutes a substantial archive, approximately a third of the output of that prolific artist.

Presumably it is the conservation of masters and prints in the past that has prevented the gaps in the holdings of the present century from being filled until now, somewhat belatedly, at inflated market prices. Nevertheless, recent exhibitions in the Department have amply demonstrated the rewards of adopting a more imaginative policy. To the growing collection of modern American prints are now added the first Martin Schemel of "Brooklyn Bridge (Swaying)" and a rare first state of Bellows's horrifying lithograph of 1971 entitled "Electrocution". The small display of Expressionist woodcuts last year has enlarged with the acquisition, among other works in this medium, of the first example printed partly in colour, Kirchner's "Womansitting" of 1912; and representation of the movement is further strengthened by the purchase of a number of powerful lithographs and drawings. Efforts have also been made to improve the holdings of Picasso prints, including five of the bonded etchings which make up the "Veil of the Suite". The Museum's intention, announced in the relevant caption, of adding further to the set should do something to boost morale around Bond Street. More surprising, in view of those champions of the Etching Revival who once were keepers of the Department, is the need to purchase late Whistler prints, but three fine impressions from the scarce "Asteroid" set, printed by the artist himself, are on display.

The exhibition is a sort of voice guide to the opportunities presented recently by the art market. Here is a fine ink drawing of "Raphael before the Emperor", probably of the sixteenth century, which came from the dispersal of the von Hirsch collection in 1978. There are a number of drawings by Velázquez from the album sold at



Erich Heckel: "Crouching Woman", a woodcut of 1913 from the exhibition reviewed here.

Sotheby's last year. A Lovis Corinth drypoint "Self Portrait with Death" is one of ten works acquired from the sale of the collection formed by Heinrich Müller, author of the catalogue raisonné of the artist's prints. The marvellously rich oil sketches of Carl Wilhelm Kolbe — an Arcadian landscape vision which grows into a strange over-luxurious jungle — were little seen in this country until Christopher Mendez exhibited a large group of them in 1977.

The Museum has also been the fortunate beneficiary of British death duties. The preliminary pen and ink study of "St James being led to Martyrdom" by Mantegna was accepted in lieu of estate duty from the estate of the late Robert Oathorne-Hardy in 1976. The finished fresco formed part of the decoration of the Ovetari Chapel in the Church of the Eremitani in Padua, one of Mantegna's earliest commissions, completed in 1456, which was almost wholly destroyed in the last war. In 1978 the Museum was allocated a delightful album containing 101 watercolour scenes of everyday life in early seventeenth-century Holland by Adriaen van der Venne, a lieu of capital transfer tax payable by the Spencer family. The most recent prize is a study in black chalk by Michelangelo for figures in the fresco of the "Last Judgement", which was received from the executors of the fourth Lord Methuen.

There are many examples of generosity of a more personal kind. The artists, their families and friends, the trustees, the Museum Society and the keepers are among the donors of an intriguing variety of works, particularly from the British school. A beautiful drawing of "The Valley Farm" by Samuel Palmer has been presented by Mrs Graham Sutherland, together with a group of studies by her late husband. The Palmer was given to Sutherland by Lord Clark, a gesture inspired, no doubt, by Sutherland's admiration for the artist, revealed in his early sketches. Lady Clark bequeathed one of the two sketch-books which, Henry Moore made of people sheltering in the London underground in 1940. On its small pages, grey ghosts lurk in the shadows beneath the red roofs of the blitz.

The Small Hotel

The back of the mind is a small hotel
And when the residents go on picnic
Of lake buckets and spades down to the sea
The betrayal begins each crumpled sheet
Is an old story and the dressing table
And the chest-of-drawers open like books
So that its one occupant the chamber-maid
Who becomes a waitress at dinner time
Of the night porter's knowledgeable smile.

Michael Longley

Force of persuasion

By Robert Hewison

Fáith Heiler
Royal Court Theatre

From out of the gloom comes a rich, vowel-led Celtic voice, chanting the names of dead and dying Welsh communities. It might be Dylan Thomas, but the accent is Irish, and bile sours the Celtic charm. Brian Friel's *Faith Heiler* is an exercise in rhetoric; it is a play for three characters, but none meets the other on the stage, and each exists as a function of the others' power of speech. The dominant imagination is that of the faith healer himself, played by Patrick Magee, whose reminiscences of events in abandoned Welsh Chapels and decayed Kirks introduce us to the themes of the play. The faith healer is more show business than preacher, but he acts as though he had the power to cure the sick, the halt and the blind who present themselves at his seedy performances. And because of the force of his imagination, some of them have indeed been cured.

Or so we are led to believe. It comes as a considerable coup de théâtre that most of what we have been told by the faith healer in the opening monologue is denied by his successor on the stage. He has told us of his manager and of his mistress, a woman from Yorkshire, but the female voice that confronts us now is again Irish, educated Irish: the Yorkshire mistress makes it plain that she is his Irish wife, Helen Mirren's narrative.

Unmoralizing Middleton

By R. V. Holdsworth

A Chase Maid in Cheapside
Upstream Theatre Club, Waterloo

This is a marvellous production. It fizzles with the theatrical energy of Middleton at his best, presenting his great comedy as a savage, hellier-skinner sexual farce, and its characters as clockwork monsters propelled by lust — for cash, rank and, above all, flesh, human and animal.

The dominant idea is that of a puppet-show. Against a Thames-side backdrop the actors freeze into stylized tableaux — as in the gossip scene, where Mistress Allwit, surrounded by the gossipy midwives, is propped up in a vertical bed — or jerk into frenzied, cartoon-like motion. Rough, white make-up and masks assist the impression of a society of grotesque and ferocious marionettes. The promoters, whose job is to catch anyone breathing the least against feeling mean during Lent, look like ambulating versions of the dead beasts they are seeking, and Sir Walter Whorehound's bawlers, who circle their stricken father all wearing the same expressionless white masks, fit a wonderfully macabre moment towards the end of the play because precisely what he sees them do before, nightmare images of his own depravity. The grimness of all this is offset by the exhilarating pace and dexterity of the production, as the tiny company of ten, acting a full text with only two or two walk-on parts cut, dash on and off, each actor having to maintain several important roles. The doubling also makes some revealing equations: "Buckwood Junior, the play's romantic hero, and Tim, the idiotic Cambridge student (Middleton was an Oxford man), are played by the same person, as are the pious Buckwood Senior and Tim's tutor, Lady Kirk and the Welsh "neeo", and Mistress Yellowhammer and Buckwood Senior's cast-off whore.

There are some splendid individual performances. Nick Wolff is a perfect Yellowhammer, at once cringing and predatory, and squalling hopelessly through a large pair of specs with frosted lenses. Tom Hunsinger as Allwit, the play's professionally complacent cuckold, and his presiding genius, a Pandarus and Therapist combined, is a pretty camp, mingling about with an obscenely versatile cane, singing about dildoes in a horrible falsetto croak and doubling over to raucous glee when Sir Walter's dowdiness is scorned. Equally memorable are David Acton's pompous and frightened Tim, dispirited by the prospect of the alternative meaning of "Whore", and the addition of

Latin provides the funniest moments in the production: Anthony Best's touchingly vulnerable and grateful Kirk; and Pam Scoble's sluttishly Mistress Yellowhammer, whose refined accent keeps letting her down. But the cast combine and support each other so well that to single out individuals seems unfair.

If there is a weakness in the production, it is in a tendency to present Middleton's elusive attitude to the frenetic sexuality of his play too simply as a conflict between exuberant endorsement (it's a mad world, my masters) and sardonic disgust. There is a third element of overt moralizing, and the director's attempts to ignore or gild it do not work. It is in keeping with the emphasis on farcical grotesqueness in the production, as well as with what we know about Buckwood Senior (his joke about "this half yard of flesh" does not refer only to the "little bastard"), that he should sport throughout an enormous, jutting cock, but the effect of his appearance is to make his formal oration on the joys of married love impossible to take seriously.

Paul Hegarty's Sir Walter Whorehound raises the same problem more acutely. Like characters in the closing stages of other Middleton plays (Pentecost Brother in *A Mad World*, the Cardiol in *Worms Beware Women*) Sir Walter undergoes a moral revision, allowing us a glimpse of human behaviour not entirely given over to folly and lust before the impetus of the plot thrusts it, and him, aside. Played here as a swaggering, mean-looking buck with a Welsh accent, pink velvet suit, and mauve balt (an older, sleazier figure is surely intended), this Sir Walter does not attempt to meet the challenge of an altered personality, and the production is clearly embarrassed by his moral rhetoric. The result is to leave too hard, cynical a surface of the comedy untroubled by any didactic earnestness, which is not Middleton's intention. And as if to underline its independence from the author, the production assembles the cast for a final, non-textual jig and song, which begins "Joy to you all, who have gathered on this day", thus taking on the traditional comic note of release and transformation which Middleton refuses to supply, and which seems foreign to the spirit of the production itself.

A Chase Maid is about to go on tour. It can be seen at the Oxford Festival on April 28-29; at Dover, Basingstoke, Chipping Norton, New Milton, and Salisbury during May; at Wells near the Sea, Folkestone, Warrimster, Leeds, Hemel Hempstead and Oldfield during June; and back at the Upstream Theatre Club, Waterloo, in the first three weeks of July.

tion, as Girce, is so to subvert everything that the faith healer has told us, even to the point of whether he is alive or dead, but certain details, certain place names, confirm that cures have been worked. At the same time, however, unceremoniously accumulating around what happened when, having exhausted the Celtic fringe of Wales and Scotland, the faith healer went home to Ireland.

The subversion of the faith healer's story is achieved at a price, for it becomes clear that the play is locked into a system which must next produce his manager, Toddy (played by Stephen Lewis), who drove the van and booked the halls and stayed with them to the end. This third party is an Englishman, an East Ender, and his rhetoric is that of the saloon bar at the Railway Hotel. Toddy confirms that though all three were mountebanks, the faith healer could indeed work miracles, and we learn more about the relationship of the trio. But mystery deepens over the Irish return.

Programmatically, it must be the faith healer who speaks last, and this final monologue recites again the events with which he has become familiar through profoundly contradictory accounts. Since his two companions have denied or revised everything that the faith healer has told us, everything must be taken on distrust; but now, as a fourth hearing of the evidence, the truth of each version becomes clear: the faith healer can work miracles, the woman and his cat, the manager does love them both — and the faith healer has invited his own death in Ireland by failing to perform the cure that his talent might produce.

Brian Friel uses his three forms of rhetoric to convince us of one case, that the imagination, willed or unwilled, can be so strong that it is possible to create the conditions under which people can recreate themselves. His metaphor is the faith healer whose imaginative will is such that his clients can strengthen a finger, or walk, or see; and we, like the clients, believe that this is so. The irony is that the faith healer, the artist, finds the mystery of his talent a too hard to bear. Beneath the modernist Friel's exploration of the nature of fiction lies a Catholic symbolism which resolves itself in the faith healer's sense of a necessary sacrifice.

Theatricality, the demands of such an argument are enormous, though good lighting and discreet expressionist sound effects assist the speakers. The difficulties are too much for Helen Mirren, who lacks the age or the authority to make her monologue successful except as a development of the modernist allegory that Friel has set himself. Stephen Lewis uses the completely appropriate devices of the English music-hall to sustain a difficult part as third speaker. The authority of the play, however, rests on Patrick Magee. He has to persuade us that the faith healer could go to a devil's Welsh chapel and make the sick well. Finally he must, and does, convince us that the faith healer has risen again from a murderous Irish dawn.

The old new look

By Peter Keating

Madame Louise
Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow

Vernon Sylvaine's *Madame Louise* is at the Citizens' Theatre until March 28. It follows John McGrath's *Blond Red Roses* ("Thirty years of battling through in the life of Bessy McGuigan, a Scottish Industrial militant"), and will be succeeded by Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* and then Shaun Lawton's *Desperado Corner* ("Not for the squeamish"). In this kind of repertoire, the decision to revive *Madame Louise*, a West End hit of 1945 by a once prolific writer of successful farces, looks genuinely adventurous.

Not that austerity is entirely absent. The play is set in Madame Louise's gown shop, an old-fashioned establishment "well off Bond Street", which tries to cater for a staid elegance that has no place in post-war London. When Madame Louise turns to gambling and loses the shop, it is taken over (together with its manager Mr Mould and his pretty assistant Penny) by a racing-tout, Mr Trout, who is on the run from the Mafia and from his domineering wife, Charley Trout and his "mannequins" quickly transform the out-moded elegance into fashionable vulgarity, and set going the misunderstandings, disguises, reversals and knock-about of classic farce.

Like many of Sylvaine's farces, *Madame Louise* was written originally as a vehicle for the comic skills of Robertson Hare and Alfred Drayton. The result is that some of the funniest scenes in the play rely for their effect on a male double-act not far removed from music hall. At the Citizens' Theatre, Patrick Henshaw gives a convincingly restrained performance as the lugubrious Mr Mould, pathetic in his loyalty to the social pretensions of the gown shop and ambitious to save the shop's fortunes by marketing a "three-in-one economy creation" which will satisfy the public demand for glamour and thrift.

By contrast, Trout needs to be flashy, quick-witted, loud, and ultimately a bit of a fool, the type of spy that Arthur English came to epitomize. Peter Jonfield is too insensitive in the role, not touching enough in his opposition to Mould's gentility, not threatening enough to provoke the sympathy of the audience that should serve to lessen the possibility of any real conflict between the two men. This imbalance is further heightened by Jill Spurr's vivid portrayal of Trout's girl-friend Pearl, who has all the broad homophobia that Trout himself lacks.

If *Madame Louise* never amounts to much more than a standard example of commercial farce, Vernon Sylvaine's dialogue does at times carry a wit that could be made to do work if the actors had sufficient confidence in its absurdity. The

first act, which relies strongly on verbal humour, is played too slowly, and it is only when the emphasis shifts to rapid movement and action in the second act that *Madame Louise* comes alive. Significantly, it was the appearance of secondary, stereotyped characters — Trout's unbearable wife and a Blimpish customer — that lifted the audience the night I was there from a mood of uncertainty to laughter. Then all was well.

With reality denied and the ridiculous welcomed, the true spirit of farce is finally let loose, giving point to so much in this production that has been demanding coherence — the period references to clothing coupons and "cash exchange expedients"; the can-knickers — a daring theatrical moment no doubt in 1945, and now looking alarmingly chic — once again; and, the final failure of the "three-in-one economy creation" that leaves Mr Mould revealed in his very unfashionable underwear. Pretty Miss Penny gets married, Trout is recaptured by Mrs Trout, Madame Louise has been busy off-stage making her fortune on the horses, and the Citizens' Theatre, if they live up the first act, could well have a popular success on their hands.



"Oostende 7" by Paul den Hollander, an exhibition of whose photographs is currently at the Night Gallery, Photographic Training Centre, 52/54 Kenway Road, SW5.

Leaving the worm unturned

By Peter Kemp

Goose-Pimples
Hamstead Theatre

Lower-middle-class suburban social life, as Mike Leigh sees it, has all the noisy voraciousness of a garbage disposal unit. *Goose-Pimples*, his latest play, in many ways closely resembles his earlier success *Abigail's Party*. Both respond to the insistent nasal whine of down-market sophistication. Both portray a party churning up into a vortex of destructiveness. Both watch an outsider sucked remorselessly into the crunching and grinding, then bung out, emotionally shredded.

In *Goose-Pimples*, this outsider is an Arab, generally uncomprehending and incoherent. Leeches upon with dignity vulgarly by Jackie, a wobbly social climber who works as a *crutcher*, he is towed back to the flat by shares in Dollis Hill. Misinterpreting her invitation, he is further misled by the appearance of the flat — a flashy spread of chrome, black plastic and tiger skin — into thinking he is in a brothel. Very finally, much of the play's first act records the ensuing comedy of errors. As Muhammad, Anthony Sher — intelligently resisting any temptation to over-play — oscillates between slumped sessions of bemused expectancy and sudden fits of frantic excitement. As Jackie, Marion Bailey hilariously registers increasing panic by body and body, and a way of crossing the room in a flurry of nail-biting and nervy hair-flicking that implies a rabbit tailed every chair.

With the return of her landlord/flatmate and his dinner-guests, the comedy becomes faster and more furious. Posing with vulgarity, rudeness and greed, all three are

The influence of anxiety

By Hugo Williams

Ordinary People
Various cinemas

A credit-curtain of Lake Michigan rises on suburban calm. Here we have a spotless little family living in anxious luxury outside Chicago. In Robert Redford's film, based on a novel by "Minneapolis housewife" Judith Guest, Donald Sutherland is the father, a defeated-looking tax attorney. His wife, Mary Tyler Moore, is a model of country-club frigidity. Their son is having nightmares. He comes down late for breakfast, shuffling like James Dean, dark make-up round his eyes for sleeplessness. "Here he is now," quips Sutherland, setting the tone of desperate diplomacy. Outside, a comic autumn sways in the driveway, threatening to unveil its skeletons.

As an average school-day proceeds, snatches of confusion impinge on the narrative: darkness, shouts, buffeting sails, jammed equipment. Everything in the

boy's life seems to have been put there to bring back images of his older brother's death in a sailing accident. The authorial hand is in such strong evidence that one cannot help wondering whether such violent flashbacks might have been responsible for the boy's suicide attempt earlier that year. The father is having them too. He saved the boy's life, and flashes of this near-sequel to the sailing accident make up his own waking nightmare. Only the wife suffers her bereavement with no subjective windows on the past. Why? The implication is that she is too insensitive. The son hears her laughing on the phone and a memory comes to him of her giggling flirtatiously with his brother. We are to understand that something stronger than grief is at work here. These scars are sexual.

The son is consumed with guilt and jealousy for his drowned brother. To punish himself he resigns from the school swimming team. The cruciform of the swimmers on their plinths, the accusatory voice of the coach, the choice of swimming as the one sport he excels in, all are typical of the story's heavy hand on irony and symmetry. Apart from saturation flashbacking, the film drips with old-time cinematography: planes take off (travel), golf balls are smashed (golf), words echo in people's heads (nervous breakdown). When a train slams over a crossing we see relief in the boy's eyes and how that suicide is still on the cards. A row at home is terminated by a slammed locker at school (severing of family ties). The film is at least as anxious as its characters.

It isn't long before the father-confessor appears in the shape of a sporty shrink. Naturally, there has to be something the kid can't bring himself to reveal about the fatal day. Once again, the flashbacks assault the trauma, only to be shaken off in rage by the weeping adolescent. Finally he confesses it: he didn't die. Yes, he clung on while his brother drowned. But you mean you didn't push him overboard or anything? Didn't even tread on his fingers? What were you worrying about?

The son contacts the nice girl from church practice — the one girl of *Alley-oop* — and removes the threadbare make-up from his eyes: he's American again. At last he can say goodbye in non-tortured terms. I was just hoping for a swift, tear-ridden conclusion when I noticed that Sutherland wasn't liking the way his wife reacted to her son's bug. She didn't respond enough. Why should she? The day before, he barked at her like a dog. There is a central moment in *Ordinary People* when Sutherland accuses his wife, on behalf, one is supposed to feel, of common decency, of having eroticized the colour of his shirt on the day of their son's funeral. How could she be so unfeeling, he wants to know? But how could he not understand the displacement of her grief?

"The film concerns feelings people have but cannot handle because they cannot define them," says Redford in a hand-out. But the film's fault is that it purports to define the undefinable, tells us how it should show. Throughout its two hours I was getting my own flashes of the Redford jaw being gallantly clenched in the face of bourgeois hypocrisy: "It would have been easy to make a film filled with car chases and the obvious commercial gimmicks," he goes on, "but I saw no virtue in that." Virtue is big in *Ordinary People*. Its characters are the opposite of laid back. What they do, in therapy with their creators, is try to be even more honest than they have already been about what they really really feel, with predictable results. A car-chase might have helped: each one is different.

The trouble with the American honesty nag is that it is really a nag for emotional conformity and sterility, the exact opposite of what it pretends to be. "Stop being so goddamn honest," says the wife in one of her weaker moments, "and start being a little generous." Critical sympathy seems to have come out for too father and son team and gone against her as an upright wasp, but when she poked and left, rejected who poison or a scapegoat from the healing body of *The Family*, my sympathies went with her. "The yard looks smaller without leaves" comments Sutherland as father and son sit hugging on the snow-covered front steps. You might say this was the crying men's *Interiors*.

New Oxford Books: History

Rebirth of a Nation
Wales 1880-1980
Kenneth O. Morgan

This is Volume VI of the new *History of Wales*, and the first volume to be published. The analysis spans the years of Liberal ascendancy end of national renaissance from 1880 to 1914; the period of economic depression, Labour ascendancy, and of tension between Welsh and Anglo-Welsh in 1914-45; and the economic regeneration, the social and cultural changes, and the reborn sense of political nationalism since 1945. £15 University of Wales Press 28 March

The Popes and European Revolution
Owen Chadwick

This book describes the change from the Catholic Church of the anointed régime to the Church of the early nineteenth century as it affected the Institution of the Papacy and through it the Church at large. £28 Oxford History of the Christian Church.

Eoin MacNeill
Scholar and Man of Action 1867-1945
Michael Tierney
Edited by F.X. Martin

This is the story of a gifted scholar and a decisive figure in political events. He initiated three revolutions: a cultural revolution with the foundation of the Gaelic League in 1883 and the revival of the Irish language; a revolution in historical studies; and a revolution in politics with the foundation of the Irish Volunteers in 1913, which led to the Irish rebellion of 1916 and on Irish Free State in 1922. Illustrated £22.50 2 April

Vannes and its Region

A Study of Town and Country in Eighteenth-Century France
T.J.A. Le Goff

This book examines the economy and society of a town and region of about 50,000 people in eighteenth-century Brittany. The author looks at the economic life between town and country and between the various social groups which the area contained, what these groups thought of each other, and the evolution of local society in the changing economic circumstances of the century. £25

Roger, Bishop of Worcester, 1164-1179

An English Bishop of the Age of Becket
Mary G. Cheney

This is the first full account of a man whom a contemporary pope called "one of the great luminaries of the English Church". It injects fresh life into the history of the Church in the twelfth century, its relations with king and pope, the conflicts of Archbishop Thomas Becket with King Henry II, and the "English" contribution to the new canon law. £20 Oxford Historical Monographs

Oxford University Press

commentary

commentary

Forty years on

By Peter Conrad

Lulu
Metropolitan Opera, New York
Lulu
Covest Garden

Directors remain uncertain whether to assign *Lulu* to the 1890s, where Wedekind's plays belong, or to the 1930s, when Berg composed the music. The decision is more than a decorative one. A fin-de-siècle *Lulu* characterizes the heroine as a fatal vamp, a colleague of Dostoevsky's amoral Salome; transferring the action to the 1930s, as Patrice Chéreau did in Paris in 1979, exonerates her — Chéreau even called her crypto-Jewish, the victim of a sick, greedy bourgeoisie against whose hypocritical pieties she offended. John Dexter's production at the Met situates itself in the ornate perversity of the 1890s. Obit Friedrich at Covent Garden has, like Chéreau, chosen the 1930s. But whereas Chéreau's sets recalled the megalomaniacal marionette of fascist architects like Speer, brutalizing and diminishing the mere human being who scuttled along its cold, slippery floors, the designs for Friedrich's version are located in the different imaginary Germany of Expressionism.

The furnishings for the New York production look and writhe like the serpentine lines of Art Nouveau. The pillars in Schön's house are twisted sticks of liquorice, and the palatial house is a peacock laid out by Tiffany. Handsome though the sets are, they're contradicted by the extraordinary Lulu of Teresa Stratas, for whom the heroine is emphatically not a venereal demon of the

1890s. Her performance attests to Lulu's innocence, even to her moral purity. She sees Lulu not as a genital automaton but as a person who is uniquely and devastatingly honest, and whose honesty terrorizes a society which preserves itself by euphemism and evasion. Lulu doesn't edit or censor her thoughts. She confides the truth of her feelings — casually advising Alva that she poisoned her mother or enquiring whether the divan where he's making love to her is the one on which his father bled to death — and her candour can kill.

In a performance of astonishing psychological subtlety, Stratas makes it clear that, though Lulu is a hostage of false morality, she is distressed by the painter's reproving catechism and when he interrogates her about her beliefs can only whisper "Ich weiss nicht", she possesses a moral code of her own to which she is sincerely true. Thus she welcomes Jack the Ripper as her savage, surgical redeemer. They are natural allies; and his knife he is cleansing and cauterizing a fouled world, just as she chastens the men who try to own her by contradicting the love which they invent to rationalize their need of her. Jack comes to her as a judge and a murdering conscience, and is accepted as such by the Lulu of Stratas, who kneels before him pleading with him to stay, tenderly petting and bribing him until he consents to kill her. Lulu envies the dead, as her wondering elegies over the corpses of her three husbands proclaim; and she has an intimacy with death which also joins her to Jack, whose profession is the retributive enforcement of morality. Stratas's disturbing, touching stage presence perfectly conveys this unorthodoxy. Wedekind called Lulu an *Erdgeist*, but it's

the spirituality, not the coarse admixture of earth, which Stratas — fragile, thin, with a child's bemused eyes in a ghost's ancient face — represents. Returning from prison, her hair shorn, wasted, her face grey, she speaks with the detachment and the power of divination of those who have been closely acquainted with death by illness.

In her voice, too, there's an eerie ambiguity. Singing, she extends into the upper register are bright and hysterically shrill, scaling pinnacles of irresponsibility, as in her manic coloratura after the painter's suicide. But when she speaks, as in Lulu's plaintive appeal to Schön in the second scene, she sounds smoky, grave, almost baritone, as if two identities, even two sexes, were housed in that slight, tormented body. The Met's Schön and Ripper were Franz Mazza, whose latently, as a singing actor matches that of Stratas. Covent Garden's Schön, Günther Relch, is a portly, caponized householder, and he has been instructed by Friedrich to play the Ripper as a bluff working man, administering the vengeance of a down-trodden class; but Mazza's Schön, his voice edged with violence, has a glowering rectitude which makes his collapse appalling to watch, and his Ripper is a baleful civil servant, bowler-hatted and carrying a medical kit-bag, an implacable, incisive avenger. Both Stratas and Mazza dwell on that precipice of what Artaud called danger, the tense and risky arena of self-exposure and even self-abuse which is reserved to great and daring performers: between them, they ignited the Met's *Lulu*.

Karen Armstrong's Lulu at Covent Garden is securely and vividly asexual but she lacks Stratas's insight and understanding and instead plays the character as a frowning, libidinal libel. Where Stratas was mysteriously self-sufficient, desistly in

her remoteness, assuming a yoga position in her choir in the dressing-room as she refuses to dance and refuses to tell why, Armstrong is a flirtatious hurricane who demolishes the painter's studio and struts through a succession of tantrums with Schön. Friedrich treats the character, symbolized by the portrait which pursues her throughout the opera and is finally slashed by the Ripper, as a Marxist cuse-mouché of sexual refutation: a woman merchandized as an appealing object, introduced as a pin-up. Lulu, he suggests, is an instance of the vacuity of modern celebrity — a sister, perhaps, of Farrah Fawcett. In the prologue, Lulu as the serpent rolls across the stage inside a suitin ceremony which she sheds as a snake does its skin. It's a brilliant theatrical image, a reptilian homage to the nightclub scene in Sternberg's *Blonde Venus* where the lumbering ape removes his chaggy head and reveals himself to be Mariette Dietrich.

Because Friedrich has chosen to Hollywoodize Lulu, it's her silliness which the Covent Garden production emphasizes. Stratas, remarking after her quarrel with Schön that "Man hat mich sat", was sulen and morbid, agonized by the rejection; Armstrong delivers the same line in a fit of mocking giggles. She giggles incessantly too when she helps the Ripper to rend the portrait, whereas Stratas behaved towards him with reverence and even gratitude for the death she knew she was to receive from him. Armstrong's is an expert performance, but it's deliberately superficial. As a celebrity, Friedrich's Lulu is the symbol of a fraudulent, inflated value, and the production makes its sharpest points during the inflationary panic of the casino scene. While the moneyed classes lament the collapse of the Jungfrau shares, a tired procession of proletarians crosses a gallery, looking down on the antics of their doomed betters. Yet Lulu herself repudiates Friedrich's

momentary interpretation of her; in her final she declares that her value is unaffected by the Jermongements of others: she has an inalienable integrity, which Stratas records her but of which she's deprived by Friedrich.

Every Friedrich production has its scenic metaphor. The stage must be an engine, its workings a mechanical corollary to the action of the drama. In his *Ring* it was the piston-tiled, hierarchal platform; in his *Idomeneo* it was those pyramidal building blocks which represented the fortification and decay of Crete society; in *Der Freischütz* it was the illusory electrical magic of the Wolf's Glen. For *Lulu* his stage is constructed of clanking wire cages, raked by searchlights — a zoo for the predatory carnivores who are Wedekind's characters, a prison for imprisoning Lulu. The stock Bauhaus ornaments of the painter's house or the glit columns and parietal bust of Schön's are facades, Marxist superstructures which tell ornamental lies about the skeletal core behind. Schön's house brings the metaphor indoors: as well as evelices and crannies for hiding Lulu's suitors, it has the vertical cage of an elevator, a wire cell which rises to the top of the proscenium. Lulu valgelously rides up in it, and Schön uses it to descend into the room like a nemesis. For the last scene, there's no set at all, just black space and the debris of society, among which Lulu scavenges. When Lulu dies, the black curtain is slit open to admit the day, and Jack saunters off into the urban dawn, having accomplished — we are to presume — an act of social hygiene and political reprisal. Despite his tendentiousness, Friedrich's version is intelligently devised and ingeniously executed. It locks performances as stunning as those of Stratas and Mazza in New York, but it chillyly depicts outdoes the busy Art Nouveau favoured by John Dexter.

Among this week's contributors

RONALD BLYTH's most recent book is *The View from Winter*, 1979.

WILLIAM BOYD's novel *A Good Man in Africa* was published earlier this year.

DAVID BRADING's most recent book is *Haciendas and Ranchos in the Mexican Bajío, 1700-1860*, 1979.

KATH BRANNAN's books include *Aegean Heartwork of the Early and Middle Bronze Age*, 1974. He is co-author, with P. J. Fowler, of *The Roman West Country*, 1976.

J. S. BRATTON is the author of *Wilton's Music Hall*, 1980.

JAMES CAMPBELL is the editor of the *New Edinburgh Review*.

VALENTINE CUNNINGHAM is the author of *Everywhere Spoken Against: Dissent in the Victorian Novel*, 1975.

BRUX DE MAIRY was BBC radio correspondent in Moscow from 1972 to 1974.

RICHARD EBERHART's most recent collection of poems is *Florida Poems*, 1981.

VICKI FRYER's first collection of poems, *Class: Relatives*, will be reviewed shortly in the TLS.

STEPHEN GERRARD's *The American Long Poem: an annotated Selection* was published in 1977.

KATE PLINT is a lecturer in English at the University of Bristol.

CELINA FOX is Curator of Paintings, Prints and Drawings at the Museum of London.

PHILIP GARDNER is co-author, with Averil Gutter, of *The God Approach: A Commentary on the Poems of William Empson*, 1978.

PATRICK GARDNER is the editor of *The Philosophy of History*, 1974.

STEPHEN GILL is a Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.

JOHN N. GREEN is Senior Lecturer in Romance Linguistics at the University of York.

L. J. HALL is lecturer in Sociology at the University of Southampton.

NORMAN HAMMOND is the editor of *Mesoamerican Archaeology*, 1975.

ROY HARRIS is Professor of General Linguistics at the University of Oxford. He is the author of *The Language Makers*, 1980.

CATE HASTE is the author of *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War*, 1977.

ROBERT HEWSON's *Under Siege*, a study of British Literature in the 1940s, was published in 1978. Its sequel *In Anger* is due to appear shortly.

R. V. HOLDSWORTH's edition of Middleton and Rowley's *A Fair Quarrel* was published in 1974.

SHURLEY JONES is a lecturer in French at University College London.

PETER KEMP's critical study *H. G. Wells and the Chillingham Age* will be published by Macmillan this year.

PAUL KENNEDY's books include *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, 1976.

RICHARD KIDDERLEY is a Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford.

HOWARD N. LUTTWAK is Senior Fellow at the Georgetown Center for Strategic Studies. His most recent book is *Strategy and Politics: Collected Essays*, 1980.

PATRICK MCARTHUR is the author of *Celine*, 1975.

OSOPPEY T. MARTIN is Reader in Egyptian Archaeology at University College London.

ROBERT BERNARD MARTIN's *Tempest: The Unquiet Heart* was recently awarded the Duff Cooper Memorial Prize.

P. R. ST. MARY'S books include *Ancient Persian Bronzes*, 1974.

ALICE NEVE is Professor of Economics at the University of Glasgow. His books include *Smallness and After*, 1976, and *Political Economy and Soviet Socialism*, 1979.

ROLAND OLIVER is Professor of the History of Africa at the University of London.

RICHARD OSBORNE is a regular contributor to *Gramophone*.

JAY PARINI's *Theodore Roethlis: An American Romantic*, was published in 1979.

S. S. PRAWIR is Tynler Professor of German Language and Literature at the University of Oxford.

ANTHONY QUINTON is President of Trinity College, Oxford. His most recent book is *Thoughts and Thinkers*, 1980.

PAT ROBERTS' books include *The Angolan Vision*, 1974, *Henry Fielding: a Biography*, 1979, and *Robinson Crusoe*, 1980.

PAUL SUBRIGNET is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

HUGH SETON-WATSON is Professor of Russian History at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London. His books include *Nations and States*, 1972, and *The Imperialist Revolutionaries*, 1978.

JILL STEINBERG's *The New Organization of Women* was published earlier this year.

E. S. TURNER's most recent book is *Dear Old Blighty*, 1980.

JENNIFER UGLOW is the editor of *Essays in Literature and Art by Walter Pater*, 1975.

IRVINE WARREN is the Drama Critic of *The Times*. His most recent book is *The Theatre of George Bernard Shaw*, 1978.

HUGH WILLIAMS' most recent collection of poems is *Love Life*, 1980.

A. N. WILSON's books include *The Laird of Abbotsford: A View of Sir Walter Scott*, 1980.

'A People and a Proletariat'

Sir, — In his review of David Smith's *A People and a Proletariat* (February 27), Or Kenneth O. Morgan suggests that Saunders Lewis was "atypical" among Welsh nationalists of the pre-war and early war years. "In contrast," says to Ambrose Bebb (sic), another Catholic nationalist whose attachment to France led him to break with Plaid Cymru's neutralism in 1940.

The same gremlin that rendered Bebb Bebb may have made catholic into Catholic. If not, and unless Dr Morgan is privy to a death-bed conversion of which even the family knew nothing, then the record should be kept straight: Ambrose Bebb died an elder of Twyngyn Presbyterian church, Bangor in Gwynedd.

It is true that he was attracted to the Roman Catholic Church. His attachment to France in 1940 was more ambivalent than is suggested in the review. He was a Francophile from his days at the Sorbonne and, unlike Saunders Lewis (see *Y Llenor*, 1972, et al) was politically influenced by Charles Maurras and the Action Française. His devotion to Maurras is recorded even in his *Dydd-Lyff Pylleghor* (the diary of the fortnight from August 20 to September 3, 1939, when Bebb was in Brittany and Paris). His identification with the personal crisis felt by many right-wing Frenchmen was compounded for him by his sympathy for the cause of those Bretons who felt (of Ireland in 1916) that France's difficult hour was the time for Brittany to strike for her freedom.

In the end he broke with Maurras's views, and disagreed with the Welsh nationalist party's neutrality. But he did not break with the party, and was its parliamentary candidate for Caernarfon in the first post-war election. As Dr Morgan suggests, the party and the subject deserve more attention.

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Brecht and Auden

Sir, — Due to the tangled state of Brecht's manuscripts it is often quite impossible to know what to take to whose version of what he wrote, never mind why and when. Unfortunately, perhaps, Brecht never threw away a scrap of paper and the tangle, for example in his manuscript of *The Dancers of Mn/* where Auden also played an apparently unimportant role, can sometimes be so complex that they begin to simplify themselves again.

In arguing about Auden's part in the translation of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, when he withdrew (let us leave why aside) or whether he translated or reworked or merely polished the verses, we should not forget that the final product, whoever produced it, the English-English version now retained in the new Methuen edition, contains enough intelligibility for us to worry about the consequences.

Some people maintain that what matters is the performance, that these verses are meant to be sung and then they are only part of a whole gesture. But most people see these plays on the page, not on the stage. The tone and the textual meaning are important. And here, in a few places, the English-English version by the Sterns and Auden in unspecified proportions goes badly awry; whether or not "Brecht later" seemed satisfied enough to consider this version for an American edition of his works scheduled to be published in 1947 (Lyon, quoted by Enright, Letters, February 6).

Due to the publishing policy we have a different version of Brecht for each side of the Atlantic. In this case the American version translated by Ralph Manheim and published by Random House and Vintage is slightly better, no matter whether you are sitting in New York, London or Hong Kong. Under the equally entangled circumstances of publishing Brecht in English, John Willett's edition is an amazing achievement, quite apart from the fact that he is way ahead of any German counterpart, and this must be a first to publishing history. But the policy and copyright requirements seem at times to have defeated sensible solutions.

In some of the *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, for example, the singer sings about the end of the beautiful poem for, rather than for the silent Chalk Circle, and it is crucial to the theme of the play. "Olingo is in

goldnen Schuhn/Träte es mir auf die Schwachen/Und es müste Böses tun/Und könnte mir lachen/Ach, zum Herrn, spät und früh/ist zu schwer ein Herz aus Stein/Oenn es macht zu grosse Mühe/Mühsig tun und böse sein./Wird es müssen den Hunger fürchten/Aber die Hungerigen nicht./Wird es müssen die Finsternis fürchten/Aber nicht das Licht."

The English-English version has: "He who wears the shoes of gold/Tamples on the weak and old/Does evil all day long/And mocks at wrong./O to carry as one's own/Heavy is the heart of stone./The power to do ill/Wears out Not those who go unfed/Fear the fall of night/But not the light."

The American version has: "If he walked in golden shoes/Cold his heart would be and stony/Humble folk he would abuse/He wouldn't know me/Oh, it's hard to be hard-hearted/All day long from moon to night/To be mean and high and mighty/Is a hard and cruel plight./Let him be afraid of hunger/Not of the hungry man's spite/Let him be afraid of darkness/But not fear the light."

Methuen's version is not only a better poem but a more accurate translation as well. What a pity that the English-English Brecht edition could not use it.

ANTONY TATLOW.

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Transatlantic Publishing

Sir, — Marcus Cunliffe (Letters, March 6) responds to my saying that there was no immediate recognition on this side of the Atlantic of the importance of Gary Wills's *Inventing America*. He directs my attention to his own TLS review of the American edition in October 1978 and to extensive reviews in the *New York Review of Books* and elsewhere.

My point was not about this public recognition, but publishers' recognition, a distinction I should have spelt out. British and American publishers of academic books advise one another of their future titles so that they can join together in the print-run, so that the economics of the production which follow — and aiming for simultaneous publication.

Presumably British publishers knew in advance about *Inventing America*. That no one joined Doubleday in producing a simultaneous British edition is the simple evidence upon which I based my assertion that the book's importance was not then recognized by British publishers. Or perhaps publishers were alert to its importance but calculated that the potential British market was too small to make it economic for their lists.

I am grateful, anyway, for Professor Cunliffe's letter in providing this chance to clarify one of the elements in the publishing process which, from an outsider's point of view, may seem to be apparent anomalies and imperfections in the communication of knowledge.

BRIAN SOUTHAM.
The Athlete Press, 90-91 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PX.

Hilaire Belloc

Sir, — Among the wood-engravings that I am including in a forthcoming edition of *The Engravings of David Jones* is "The Great British Public," represented as a recumbent gaffer in plus-four, with the head of an ass, his feet resting on a crumbling colonnade, while a large spider with a dollar sign on its back waves its web over him, his golf-club and the Union Jack. I understand from David Jones that the engraving illustrated a Ballade by Hilaire Belloc, but I have failed to find it among Belloc's published poems. Another favourite Ballade of his, which he also attributed to Belloc, concerned Edward VI's mistress, Mrs. James. I recall that one stanza ended with the line "And Mrs. James will entertain the King." The Envol will entertain the King. This also I cannot find. I should be most grateful for any information about either Ballade.

DOUGLAS CLEVERDON.
The Clever Hill Editions, 27 Barbican Square, London N1 1JP.

The History of Secularism

Sir, — R. T. Shannon's fashionably patronizing discussion of the secularist movement, in his review of Edward Royle's *Radicals, Secularists and Republicans* (March 6), contains some fashionably careless errors.

There were more than just "two important women in the movement"; as well as Anne Besant and Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner, there were Eliza Sharpley, Emma Martin, Horrie Law, Kate Watts, Edith Vane, and so on. W. J. Ramsey can hardly have "oscillated wildly" for many years between fervent Christianity and perverted Secularism; his only Christian manifestation was as a choirboy, and his active membership of the secularist movement lasted from the age of fifteen until his death at the age of seventy-two. The edition of *Fruits of Philosophy* which led to the Bradlaugh-Besant trial was published not in Bristol in 1876 but in London in 1877; and the jury not only "tried to convict" the defendants but did so, though they won an appeal on technical grounds. Incidentally, Paine's first name was not Tom but Thomas, and Arnold's was not Methew but Matthew.

There has been no such thing as the "National Secularist Society"; it was and still is the National Secular Society. The Leicester Secular Hall has not been one of the "provincial centres" of the NSS; the Leicester Secular Society was and still is an independent organization. It is not true that the movement had declined so much that "by 1915 only five groups survived, all in London"; delegates to the 1915 annual conference of the National Secular Society represented not only the main society but also a dozen branches, half outside London, and the situation was still the same more than half a century later.

The assumption that the life of the secularist movement was over more than half a century ago is contradicted by the fact that on March 1, 1981, the centenary of the Leicester Secular Hall was commemorated at a packed public meeting which was attended by representatives of several organizations and by local MPs, and which was addressed by Michael Foot, the leader of the Labour Party and a Distinguished Member of the National Secular Society, on the subject of socialism and freethought. As it happened, on the same day the first Football League match was played on a Sunday morning. So the life of the movement is not over, and neither is its work.

NICOLAS WALTER.
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Christianity and Secularity

Sir, — To argue as Peter Lee has in his review of John Bowtell's book (January 23) that Christianity was not hostile to homosexuality is to ignore the Christian and medieval literature. Christian apologetics is not history and though he, as well as Bailey, can argue that medieval writers misinterpreted the Christian message, it was none the less this misinterpretation that prevailed. The first Christian legislation against homosexuality did not come in 533 but almost from the first appearance of Christianity as the imperial religion. In 342 Constantine and Constantine enacted some ambiguous legislation which, however it is interpreted, was clearly aimed at homosexuality and was clearly hostile. The Christian Emperors Theodosius, Valentinian II, and Arcadius in 390 prescribed — burning

for those who engaged in anal intercourse. Fortunately these laws were not always enforced and in a few cases collected from the prostitute until the time of the Emperor Anastasius but they were on the books and served as background to the Justinian legislation. The Christian penitentials were also uniformly hostile to homosexuality while they show variations in attitudes to other sexual activities. St Augustine and a whole host of Western Church Fathers are also hostile, to homosexuality and this hostility appears throughout ecclesiastical writing of the Middle Ages. Such attitudes came to be institutionalized in the emerging canon and civil law of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and were given reinforcement in the scholastic commentaries. This does not mean that gay did not exist since theory and practice did not always coincide with practice. In terms of prohibition but gays,

regardless of their influence, were always extremely vulnerable to scapegoating and to attack. The history of these gays should be sought out and published but to argue that the medieval Church was not hostile to homosexuality is to ignore the reality of medieval Church teaching. This hostility, as I have shown elsewhere, was often based upon quite erroneous assumptions (and in fact still is) but it none the less existed. It was no sudden new development of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Details can be found in my *Sexual Variance in Society and History* (University of Chicago Press) and in my forthcoming (with James Brundage) *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1981).

VERN L. BULLOUGH.
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'Private Lives'

Sir, — In thanking Mark Amery for his long, thoughtful and generous review of my *Gertrude Lawrence* (March 3) could I just answer the one question he raises? I too had heard rumours of a film of *Private Lives* made from the plays during the original 1930 run, and put them to Coward when I was working on his biography in 1969. He denied all knowledge of it, and I suspect that if there had been a camera in the stalls he'd have been the first to see, and direct, it.

SHERIDAN MORLEY.
Punch, 23-27 Tudor Street, London EC4Y 0HR.

Reading Dickens and Henry James

Sir, — It was surprising in a week (February 6) which contained some thoughtful and interesting contributions to the current debate on literary theory to find in the TLS such a flat-earth review as 'A. N. Wilson's "hatchet job" on books by Susanne Kappeler and Susan Horton on James and Dickens respectively. Though such performances would appear to be Mr Wilson's forte (he gave us one on David Punter's book on Gothic fiction a couple of months ago) one wonders quite what qualifications he brings to the task. Presumably these ought to be those of the intensely scrupulous close-reading practical critic — yet the score he gives (for instance) upon Horton's assertion of Mrs Wadso's lesbianism and David Quilp's "strange sexual attractiveness" doesn't suggest this. For I'm sure I'm not the only student of Dickens prepared to agree with her. And when he "barges the text" to demolish her suggestion that Quilp's "de-licious character" compliment to his wife accompanies erotic manoeuvres, his eye falls to alight on the passage to which she's closely referring: "Mr Quilp planted his two hands on his knees, and straddling his legs out very wide apart, stooped slowly down, and down, and down, until, by screwing his head very tight on one side, he came between his wife's eyes and the floor." Whatever the quality of these books, Mr Wilson's gratuitous mutilation of them hardly seems to advance the traditionalist case against literary theory in any persuasive way, and one wonders what odd notion of "balance" it is that prompts the TLS to permit him to do this at such a time, and in such an issue.

MICHAEL HOLLINGTON.
School of Humanities, Griffith University, Nathan, Brisbane, Queensland 4111.

Namesakes

Sir, — I shall be grateful if you will publish this letter to make it clear that I am not the namesake of mine who has recently written to both your Journal (Letters, March 6) and mine to make it clear that he is not me.

On a recent visit to the Keats Society in Oxford, several members of that club mistook me for the author of *Keats and the Mirror of Art and English Literature 1815-1832*. This was embarrassing. I am not and in no way share the views expressed by Professor Jack.

IAN JACK.
The Sunday Times, PG Box 7, 200 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8EZ.

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Arts Council OF GREAT BRITAIN

SHORTLIST 1981

The winners will be announced on April 23

FICTION

Judged by
Lettice Cooper

The Healing Art
A. N. Wilson
Secker & Warburg / £8.50

Out of Season
Ian J. Burton
Sidgwick & Jackson / £5.95

Indirect Method
Francis King
Hutchinson / £6.50

GENRE FICTION

Judged by
Francis Wyndham

The Lake of Darkness
Ruth Rendell
Hutchinson / £5.50

Innocent Blood
P. D. James
Faber & Faber / £5.95

Roderick
John Sladek
Granada / £6.95

CREATIVE NON-FICTION

Judged by
Professor John Bayley

The Victorians and Ancient Greece
Richard Jenkins
Basil Blackwell / £15.00

Foreign Devils on the Silk Road
Peter Hopkirk
John Murray / £8.95

Havelock Ellis
Phyllis Grosskurth
Allen Lane / £10.00

A city of the mind

By Philip Gardner

poem, *The Ship's Orchestra*, first published in 1966. This, like *The Cut Pages*, is a work "written on a principle of unpredictability": in that it (to turn the avant-garde into the old hat), a kind of modified surrealism, in which many individual passages make sense but most are hermetically sealed from the others. Fisher had not had the distraction of a real voyage before he wrote the poem, but one wonders whether he had read the ship—and sometimes the lifeboat—narratives of James Hanley, or Hanley's long interior monologue *The Welsh Soldier*. The effect of *The Ship's Orchestra* is that of some play for disembodied voices on the Third Programme: well-executed in its way, flatteringly taxing to undergo, but likely to make the audience exit looking puzzled.

That would be a pity. Even though Fisher seems to distrust critics (note the quiet deadliness of "Critics Can Bleed"), and in his poem "The Making of the Book" describes poetry's purpose as "constantly to set up little enemies", he also sees poetry as having a more positive function. "A poem", he said in his 1973 interview, "has business to exist . . . If there's a reasonable chance that somebody may have his perceptions re-arranged by having read it", and the reader entering this volume soon finds this happening to him in Fisher's first long poem *City* (originally published in 1961 but most revised for his Fulcrum volume of *Collected Poems* of 1968). Its use of interspersed prose passages, and its location, a Birmingham "which has already turned into a city of the mind", anticipates the Geoffrey Hill of *Meridian* hymns, in which King Offa is among other things presented in modern dress as "overlord of the MS".

It was partly his long physical association with Birmingham that kept Fisher out of the "mainstream" of post-war British poetry and differentiated him from many poets of or near his own generation who were born in the provinces (like Philip Larkin and Ted Hughes) but who went to Oxford or Cambridge and moved on to other parts of the country to work. Fisher, born in Birmingham and educated there, later taught in his home area and even now lives only forty miles from it. *City* is really an impersonal requiem for Fisher's home town, a nineteenth-century industrial creation altered and emptied by the war, and not yet ready to put on the post-war identity decreed for it by planners. The scene, a ghost-like palimpsest of buildings and people, present and past, was one which no other poet had thought to record:

The river shudders as down drains on its
On the first bus nightworkers sleep, or stare
At boardings that look out on yesterday.
The white-flanked towers, the stillborn
The thousand golden offices, untenanted,
The house, a curious yet moving detachment,
Is characteristic of Fisher; but the rhythm has yet to take on the bardic one finds in his spare, mature verse. It is the prose passages, with their sombre sequence of clauses, which look forward to that; and they also transmit a sense, sharp and elusive at once, of the transfiguring of the ordinary, and an uncertainty about that transfiguring, which I take to be Fisher's most valuable "subversion" of the reader's way of looking at the world:

I come quite often now upon a sort of
coast, a rag of light blowing among the
things I know, making me feel I am not
the one for whom it was intended, that I
have inadvertently been looking through
another's eyes and have seen what I
cannot receive (. . .) The light keeps on
separating the world like a table-knife: it
sweeps across what I see and suggests
what I do not. The Imaginary comes to me

Runs, rests and resolutions

By Jay Parini

JEAN VALENTINE:
The Messenger
67pp. Faber, with Farrar, Straus, Giroux.
£4.95.
0 374 20871 9

Jean Valentine's audience has always been small but enthusiastic, which is the sort of response one expects for a poet whose work is dense, almost hermetic, yet striking and intense. *The Messenger* is her fourth book in fifteen years; it is also her most difficult one. The peculiar sense of isolation that has marked her poems from the start persists, as does the hushed, dreamlike quality of her voice. Her imagery is elusive, more so than before; images float into view and disappear with alarming frequency: "A pitched ceiling, / two coats; apple petals; / the thin smell of woodsmoke, / wood, turpentine, . . ." One has to ignore bafflement and slip back to allow these "ordinary things" to seek their own levels of meaning.

When the method works, her poems reverberate in the memory, luminous and strange. Miss Valentine takes enormous risks, cutting away most of the connective tissue which normally gives some narrative direction to a poem; she reduces her language to a spare, uncompromising instrument, banishing all humour and any obvious music from her work. The resulting poems are elliptical, suggestive, often frustratingly obscure.

Her previous book, *Ordinary Things* (1974), had about the quality of a bad dream. The poet brought into disturbing juxtaposition images of a woman's life as she fights for survival among lovers, children, deaths, friendships and infidelities. The epigraph from the Dutch poet, Huidobro, sets the tone:

Chalk lines still mark the floor
Just where you stood. Our shoulders
touched
Ordinary things.

This transformation of a scene in memory from a seemingly benign occurrence into an eerie, highly personal symbol of loss and isolation is characteristic of *Ordinary Things*, which ended with two haunting poems, "Susan's Photograph" and "Outside the Frame." "Look back in at the child,"

she concluded, "growing into their lives, in their sleep." After the harsh catalogue of sorrows that made up this volume — still her best to date — this last poem approached something like calm. "Slowly we can tell each other some things about our lives," she wrote.

Six years later, *The Messenger* opens with the same two poems, suggesting that Miss Valentine is somehow taking up where she left off. Now she tells of "the runs, rests, brief resolutions; falls, and lulls/hard, joyless, in certainty; dull, sweet / durances, human silences." The "falls, and lulls" predominate. "Living Together" is typical of her new work:

Dawn, streaks of rose-brown, dry—
A car starts up. A needle veers,
an hour, a summer . . . Day

Small perfections

By Vicki Feaver

FRANCES HOROVITZ:
Water Over Stone
48pp. Enitherron, £3.75
(paperback, £2.25).
0 903289 51 X.

Regular listeners to BBC radio poetry programmes will know Frances Horowitz for a few that are based on myths, arise for the most part domestic and unextraordinary. "Let that she uses to her advantage." In "Let that she uses to her advantage," the description of a table-top, solid and cluttered; provides the poem not only with authenticity but with a solid basis for the more rhapsodic passage that follows:

At a first glance her frequent use of such words as trees, birds, water, stones, clouds, fire, wind, and moon and stars suggests that she is a nature poet, and rather a free one. Not only are there no poems, plenitude, tractor fumes, fertiliser bags, or any of the other evidence of man's occupation that we have come to expect, but Mrs Horowitz employs these elements, which she uses to her advantage, in a way that is both surprising and effective. She gets away

with as much force as the real, the remembered with as much force as the immediate.

The influence of William Carlos Williams, together with a shared response to place and to the visual, links Fisher with Charles Tomlinson and Basil Bunting; and in the 1960s he moved towards more open forms and generally spikier, if not always short, poems. "In Touch" specifically invokes Williams's *Pictures from Bruegel* "to see what ways Ooc Williams had of taking off/ into a poem", and in his 1973 interview Fisher stated that, if he had to adopt "any poetic slogan", Williams's doctrine "No ideas but in things" would be it. In "The Memorial Fountain" he describes himself as a "realist", who is "working" to dislodge an event from an opinion, and he pursues this self-denying occupation through a number of spare sequences which (together with *City*) are his most important and original contribution to post-war British poetry: "Matrix", the sixteen (once twenty-seven) Birmingham poems called "Handsworth Liberties"; the more recent, more mellow "Wonders of Obligation"; and the earlier group, set on the North Devon-Somerset border, entitled "Glenholme Poems". A quotation from one of these may serve to demonstrate how Fisher's cool search for concreteness and objectivity can transcend itself, becoming an intense, perfect blend of observer and "thing" observed:

Pillars of smoke
rose coloured
white
smoke fans
flat burner flames
suddenly displayed
on silver squares
All that
is Glenholme
Celestial Aether
breaking above the haze

settles back on the last
century, our trying, our Biblical
conviviality.

This should, should not, happen, these
two people met, or not then, not now;
or now.

Out in the white Judean light
you move like figure in a lesson;
You open your life like a book.
Still I hear your story
like a parable, where every word is
simple.

but how does this one
go with the one before, the next . . .

Miss Valentine unwittingly describes her own new work in this last stanza: she opens her life like a parable, brief allusive

with it partly because of her intuitive feeling for that primitive incantatory quality almost lost to contemporary poetry and also because her subject is not primarily nature at all. The water and stones and so on are there because they represent unchanging and eternal rhythms. They are a backdrop against which she sets human anxieties about identity, time, separation and loss.

It is an old theme but Mrs Horowitz approaches it with a freshness and poignancy of her own. For her poems, except for a few that are based on myths, arise for the most part domestic and unextraordinary. "Let that she uses to her advantage." In "Let that she uses to her advantage," the description of a table-top, solid and cluttered; provides the poem not only with authenticity but with a solid basis for the more rhapsodic passage that follows:

my fingers move across a vast table
encouraging papers and money
bread heaves under a damp cloth
daily the house empties forth
out drifts its strange and friends
we are renewed each day
a fine smoke shimmering the young
sometimes my head is a lightness
filled with dry grass

n dozen miles across channel

The achievement of such moments of vision, the floating of "real" things into a fictive world, is for Fisher fraught with difficulty. At the end of "Glenholme Poems" he fears that things seen "are already / three parts idle", and in "Wonders of Obligation" he remarks — with a touch of regret which the reader may find it unnecessary to share — that "my life keeps / leaping out of my poetry to me / all directions". It is significant that the momentary glimmer of light on water, the enticement of objects edge-on to the air, are recurrent motifs in Fisher's poetry. His chosen task is a balancing act between perception and what it perceives, and his compulsion to keep on attempting it — the subject of "Cut Wound" — makes one feel that, at least in terms of basic impulse, the poet with whom Fisher has most in common is Wallace Stevens.

Fisher's range is of course smaller; he makes no claim to cover more than "a fairly limited node of perception". And there is hardly any similarity of verbal texture and memorabilia rhetorical gestures and the work of a poet who can say "I mistrust the poem in its hour of success", because he is "thing capable of being / tempted by elixir into the wonderful". Some may find Fisher's poetic territory too rarefied for their liking; for my own part I am sorry he has reduced its extent and its temperance by omitting from this collected volume two such humane poems of place as "Kingsbury Mill" (originally published in *The Memorial Fountain* in 1966) and "Abraham Darby's Bridge", which came out in the 1970s. Nevertheless, Fisher's work has much to offer the reader who is willing to concentrate as the poet himself does; and perhaps, now it is more accessible, its unique place in contemporary British poetry — not outside it — will be recognized.

constructs designed to convey a hidden truth. Her words are simple as could be, but one is led to ask "how does this one go with the one before?"

Miss Valentine is clearly trying to go beyond the bleakness of her earlier work. The theme of resurrection, of spiritual redemption, runs through the title sequence and two fine translations (Mandelstam's "394" and Gosterbil's "Orpheus"); the final sequence, "Solitudes", is a diary of sorts describing the poet's emotional trajectory from winter solstice to spring equinox to a given year, ending on a note of hope, celebrating "the play of the breath of the world". None of this, the stripped, unyielding quality of this poet's work will admit few and discount most of her readers.

I spread into the sky
over seas and wide forests
to find you
how you are town out of me
a cry not my own splits the wind
I am streaming with air
where are your limbs in this whiteness?

Less successful are the poems without this foundation in a believable reality: "Dream" and "Song" and "The Woman's Dream" for example. In these Mrs Horowitz loses the control evident in her best poems and is carried away into sub-Lawrentian fantasy.

There is perhaps one more criticism to be made of *Water Over Stone*: a few of the poems are pruned to the point where they become laudably flat. "I dreamed a poem, perfect as the first five-pointed star, / that melted at dawn" writes the poet in "New Snow"; such poems ("Lament" for example) are, in their own terms small perfections and just like snowflakes they seem to melt off the page, or at least in the mind. Ironically, the most memorable lines in the whole book are not the poet's own, but ones borrowed from her father: "A clever daughter gone down hill" you said" and "Stay in your own corner . . . don't let them knock you down" ("Blessy"). This poem, along with "Envy", which draws on her mother's vision of her dead husband, and "Visit to the British Museum", are probably the strongest in the collection.

Gout has existed in times ancient and modern: but like all the best cultural phenomena it can be perceived as having enjoyed a "heyday". This period of special prominence emerges from two novels by George Eliot. In Chapter 7 of *Romola* we encounter Bartolomeo Scala, Secretary of the Florentine Republic during the Quattrocento, who "had got richer and richer and more and more gouty, after the manner of successful mortals". At the end of *Middlemarch*, we hear of Lydgate's decline into prosperous Victorian mediocrity, once he had written "a treatise on Gout, a disease which has a good deal of wealth on its side". These passages fix the image of a malady befitting the well-to-do: more important, they define the historical limits within which gout was to make its greatest impact on human affairs.

The high noon of this heyday may be said to occur in England around 1750 to 1800. Later in this article, I shall take most of my examples from this period; but some ground needs to be cleared first. Astonishingly, there is no full-scale history of the subject, clinical or cultural — in any language, so far as I can discover. References to gout are scattered through any number of works on medical and social history; but the references simply lie there, nicely spaced and intact, like some untroubled Cyclopes in the rough waters of scholarship. Here I shall be attempting what might be called the first clinical epidemiology of gout. It follows that some historical background will be required, even though it must be cursory and selective.

It has been established from Egyptian burial chambers that a condition which would now be diagnosed as gout existed in the second millennium BC. According to some commentators the malady of Asa, King of Israel, who was "dissessed in his feet" (2 Chronicles 16), should be identified with gout, but this can be no more than tradition. There are references in writers of classical antiquity, including Ovid, Seneca and Varro, who prescribed cabbage as a sovereign remedy. Hippocrates had noted that women in Greece did not succumb to the disease, or not before the menopause. This seems a reliable finding, but for some reason hard to fathom it did not, in Seneca's observation, apply to Rome. Gibbon mentions one or two celebrated sufferers; but you could write a full bibliography of ancient civilizations without spending much time on gout.

With the Renaissance, all this changes. The malady struck Medici and Habsburg Imperially. There is in Florence the unfortunate Piero II Ottolengo (1416-69), who survives first as father of Lorenzo the Magnificent and second by virtue of his own swollen cognomen. A century later, the Emperor Charles V came to swell his distended "Yuste" monastery in remote Extremadura. He had suffered the first ravages of gout at the age of twenty-eight, and had then endured severe attacks on several occasions. By 1558 he was unable to walk, and he wrote or to walk. His inordinant appetite had contributed to the onset of the disease. A major-dome quoted to him the saying, "Gout is cured through the mouth" (ons of many unavailing proverbs on the subject), but he would never be cured. Moreover, his son Philip II was bequeathed the ailment, though not the Empire. In his own last days, Philip sat in the gloomy caverns of the Escorial, his foot raised up high on a stool, whilst he transcribed business secular and divine. A generation later it was William III, whose first attack took place in his late thirties. During the next few years he was compelled to take to his bed, sometimes for as long as six weeks at a stretch. He was the more troubled by his symptoms since Kepler, no less, had drawn his horoscope and predicted that he would die of venereal disease — a condition not always accurately distinguished in contemporary phylax.

These cases are exceptional, because they concern "men of" such prominence. Nevertheless, they are not misleading, for gout came home and more to intervene in the course of public life. Campaigns were interrupted in the case of Queen Anne. Parliament was prorogued for a crucial extra period: lives were reassessed, and resolutions taken. Nothing ever caused so many fresh leaves to be turned over. Gout did more than Waley or the avenging to make people in middle age alter their way of living. This was not only a matter of diet or exercise, but of a more fundamental change in the way of life. The onset of gout and its passage from feet and hands to noes (especially) and elbows does suggest that here is an authentic case. The malady factor involved is "body

The rise and fall of gout

By Pat Rogers

that it is a malady of the mature (but not senile); that it afflicts the historically dominant sex; and that malnutrition is one of the few reliable prophylactics — which meant that it could be seen as an authentic ruling-class disability. All these tendencies were to find their fullest expression in the eighteenth century, and in Britain above all.

Gout is a hereditary metabolic disorder characterized by the deposit of sodium urate on the joints, normally by means of a regular progression from the extremities. Modern research has shown the necessity in treatment of combating the build-up of purine elements, that is the crystalline solid (CH₂N₄) derived from uric acid. In earlier ages the term "gout" was applied rather vaguely to a wide range of allied medical conditions. It was not until around 1600 that French physicians established a satisfactory distinction from rheumatism, and indeed the wholly different etiology of the two illnesses did not prevent confusion for two centuries more. A number of

chemistry, preventing the build-up of uric acid in women. Again, the hereditary element, which is still not fully understood, may mean that there is also a differential in terms of genetic transmission. One might add that some women writers, including Mrs Pendarves, later Celsus, and Mrs Piozzi, had to spend a great deal of time caring for gout-racked husbands.)

The third problem: the fitful nature of the illness. Gout was one of the more arbitrary disorders in the way it came and went. Long periods of quiescence meant that sufferers could harbour the hope that the malady had spontaneously cured itself; and indeed a scattering of such occurrences is recorded.

Fourth, there is the virtual absence of anything resembling a panacea for gout. A series of hopeless pretexts confirms the inefficacy of medicine until very recent times. "A la goutte le medecin ne voit goutte" — vainly exclaimed, "Drink wine, and have the gout; drink no wine, and have the

"A sovereign cure for the gout," said Mr Pickwick, hastily producing his note-book — "what is it?"

"The gout, sir," replied Mr Weller, "the gout is a complaint as arises from too much ease and comfort."

"If you're ever attacked with the gout, sir, just you marry a widdow as has got a good loud voice, with a decent notion of usin' it, and you'll never have the gout again. It's a capital prescription, sir. I takes it reg'lar and I can warrant it to drive away any illness as is caused by too much jolly."

But in general there were few sovereign remedies. Quacks did not make a fortune in this sphere of business; their failures were too palpable. Occasionally one comes across newspaper advertisements where gout is mentioned: for instance, Wasse's elixir, sold in Rochester for three shillings a half-pint, was claimed in 1704 to be excellent for the complaint, as also for the

Blood, there is never any Security against their breaking out; and that often . . . when least suspected."

There were other manuals on the subject: one by the fashionable physician Cheyne, one by the deathless poet and medico Sir Richard Blackmore, one by Samuel Johnson's bibulous friend Dr James. The latter's *Treatise on the Gout and Rheumatism* (1745) is not likely materially to have assisted many sufferers, but unlike his notorious fever powders it cannot have killed anybody. Boerhaave, himself alleged to suffer from "gouty arthritis", which may have been lumbago, experimented with treatment by mercury and gold during the 1720s. More successful than anyone was William Cadogan, who had already found a winner with his child-care manual. His *Dissertation on the Gout* (1771) ran to nine editions within a year. Dr Johnson thought that the advice Cadogan offered was good, in so far as it recommended "temperance, exercise, and cheerfulness" (not a prophylactic Tony Weller would have endorsed). On the other hand, he thought the work "foolish, in maintaining that the gout is not hereditary, and that one fit of it, when gone, is like a fever when gone". *Expero credite*. Garrick read the dissertation, but decided to postpone adopting Cadogan's regimen until his wife returned from a visit. Cadogan argues that gout is caused by indolence, temperance and venation. He notes that some success has been obtained with the Duke of Portland's powder, which managed to keep the illness "floating", rather than settled for a period of years. This was a compositum made up from guaiacum, a drachm a day to be taken for three months, and then a progressively smaller dose. Its efficacy is questionable, although it produced some remission in Fielding's case, and it was certainly preferable to one cure doted by Lawrence Stone: "apply live earthworms to the affected part until they begin to smell".

There was in fact one dependable nostrum already known. This was colchicine, an organic alkaloid derived from the autumn crocus or *colchicum*. Widely used in France, it was effectively banned in eighteenth-century England. This may have been because it often resulted in an acceleration of the next attack, even though the immediate symptoms were relieved. More likely, the prohibition arose from the unpleasant side-effects, which included headaches and shivering fits. Benjamin Franklin said to have known of colchicine, but the drug does not figure in the regimen of his friend Benjamin Rush, who lectured on the nature and cure of the gout in Philadelphia during the 1790s. Rush's method was to puncture the foot with a lance and drain off water. He also remarks that "too long sitting with depending feet should be avoided. I have known a tight roller of fine flannel worn on the ankles under the stockings do great service. Let it be tried." Fine flannel was thoroughly genteel, and the cure as much as the illness would have pleased Lord Chesterfield. Rush had met Johnson in London some years earlier, through their common friend Reynolds. It is not known if the talk turned to gout; all that is recorded is Johnson's complaint regarding Boswell's habit of asking questions such as "Pray, Doctor, why is an apple round, and why is not a pear so?"

Gout, intervened at many critical eighteenth-century junctures. When Blough Atterbury was in the Tower awaiting trial for his Jacobite activities, public prayers were offered in churches up and down the nation for his gout. Three years later, in 1725, Jonathan Wild refused to go to chapel in Newgate gaol, prior to his execution, pleading (as Defoe has it) "his lameness by the gout". Pitt the Elder had to be carried into the House to make one of his most dramatic orations. During the Wilkie disturbances the Lord Mayor of London, Bress Crosby, summoned a gentleman, respite on account of a severe fit. George III's illness in 1788 began with symptoms which, it was hoped, would prove to be those of gout: for this was taken to be the least serious of the possible disorders. He went to Cheltenham to take the waters, but still on his return, according to Fanny Burney, "walked like a gouty man". Today it seems likely that porphyria could account for almost all the King's symptoms, including his epileptic lulls; but no contemporary had heard of porphyria. Around the same time, the Chevalier D'Eon was



"The Gout," a coloured etching with aquatint by James Gillray, 1799.

typologies were devised, such as "regular" (joints only) and "irregular" (spreading to other organs); "flying gout", where the pain migrated seemingly without cause from one part of the body to another (this was diagnosed in the case of George III); "poor man's gout", caused by an excess of salt liquors; and, moving away from the condition narrowly defined, in *goutie miliaire*, *la goutte saturnique* (lead poisoning), "Spanish gout" (syphilis), "falling gout" (epilepsy). Leaving aside the freer metaphorical usages, it is evident that no great precision in the term had arrived by the time of Johnson's *Dictionary*. "The arthritis: a periodical disease attended with great pain."

The symptoms with which medicine had to wrestle for many hundreds of years are more notably these. First, a sudden onset, generally quite early in adult life, with a sharp pain localized in the toes or sometimes the thumb. A survey conducted in the early part of this century fixed the incidence of the disease as occurring most frequently in the thirties, less often in the twenties, then the forties. The legend that gout is a penalty of old age has long been current: it is most memorably enshrined in Flaubert's remark, "A man can no more separate age and convalescence than he can part young limbs and lechery; but the gout galls the one, and the poet plunders the other." Similarly, the author of *A Tale of Two Cities* considers the judicial bench "for the Repose of old and gouty Limbs". But the facts show otherwise; and my own sample of nearly fifty eighteenth-century cases tallies with the later research. The sufferer may survive into old age, but that is another matter.

Second, gout is overwhelmingly a male disorder. A minute proportion of women sufferers are recorded. Whether Queen Anne is one of the rare exceptions is problematic, although the onset of the illness in her thirties and its passage from feet and hands to noes (especially) and elbows does suggest that here is an authentic case. The malady factor involved is "body

gout too". "There is no pain like the gout, and toothache", and so on. Puller records "Gout, the disgrace of phylax", and there are other such despairing expressions.

The last difficult characteristic is that over-indulgence in food and drink appears to precipitate the disease, as in the case of Charles V. Not merely rich diet, but also the consumption of wine which could predispose the patient to attacks. It is notorious that the increased habit of drinking port and madeira in Britain after the Methuen treaty of 1703 led to the prosperity of Bath, as all the bettered rakes lipped off for the cure. Less well known is the fact that beverages such as tea, coffee and cocoa might also predispose victims. There is no evidence, in passing, that gout is — as are certain respiratory conditions — a blight of urban man: its high visibility at a period of increased urbanization probably relates to dietary facts unconnected with the disease. Justice Woodcock, in Arne's comic opera *Love in a Village*, corresponds to innumerable real-life sufferers.

Faced with all these symptoms, patients and physicians alike made what they could of the situation. As late as the Victorian era, there were speculations and conjectures in abundance: the women showed a lesser incidence because they were less exposed to the "conditioning activities", presumably a euphemism for carnal excesses; that gout was less prevalent in Scotland because spirits, rather than wine, were drunk there; that sufferers had too little alkali in their bloodstream to counteract the eddies effects: Lord Chesterfield was to forebode George Eliot, in sentiment if not in tone, when he stated that "gout is the distemper of a gentleman; whereas the rheumatism is the distemper of a hasty coachman". There is an exchange to the purpose in chapter 20 of *Pickwick Papers*, when Sam Weller warns his father against drinking too much brandy: lest it bring on his old complaint:

"I've found a sover'n cure for that, Sammy," said Mr Weller, setting down the glass.

rusticating in Tonnerre, suffering from gout which he attributed to the lack of fresh air and exercise he suffered in his new role as a woman. Certainly it is the active spirits who seem to escape the malady; Casanova, who survived smallpox, pneumonia, bladder trouble and sword injuries, or De Ponte, whose mere coaching accidents were enough to kill off three lesser mortals.

Literature is full of the subject. Gil Blas begins as a quick, lively, gaily pastry-cook. Matthew Bramble appears *Humpty Clunker* with an account of his lameness, and it is in quest of relief from gout, amongst other things, that he sets out on his travels to Bristol, Haverhill and to Bath. Not fancifully, Bramble sees Bath as a "national hospital". More than any other of the great spas, it was adapted to the halt and the lame. Its waters had no greater virtue in this regard than those of Baden-Baden, Karlsbad or Spa. But where other resorts attracted consumptives, asthmatics and the drowsy, in Bath you always found the steep slopes cluttered with invalid carriages. There were Bath-chairs before Minerva had got its pumps well into operation, and long before Leamington had spread its terraces across the gentler undulations beside a more sluggish Avon.

As for poetry, Lady Winchelsea contrives a fable of the gout and the spider, written after her husband had suffered his first attack. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, it may be recalled, wished her enemies not dead but "give them the gout" — she possibly had her husband in mind. Pope finds a neat simile: "So, when small humours gather to a gout, The Doctor fancies he has driv'n 'em out," whilst in the *Verses on the Death of Dr Swift* his friend summons up a comical picture of indifference to the adversity of others:

Dear honest Ned is in the Gout,
Lies rackt with Pain, and you without:
How patiently you bear him groan!
How glad the Case is not your own!

There is quite a lot of other people's gout scattered through the pages of the *Journal to Stella*, and generally Swift seems able to bear the misfortunes of his friends with tolerable equanimity. His squeamishness was attached to a different object: "The queen is well, but... I am told she has sometimes the gout in her bowels (I hate the word bowels)".

Later in the century, Cowper makes a familiar point in *The Task*:

O may I live exempted (which I live)
Outlives of pangs, of appetite obscene!
From pangs artistic, that infect the toe,
Of libertine excess, The Sofa suits
The gouty limb, 'tis true; but gouty limb,
Though on a Sofa, may I never feel...

The adjective "gouty" came to be used on an extended sense, to mean lecherous or parasitic. When Dr Burney finds the execution of a keyboard or string player deficient, he is liable to contrast their "gouty" fingers with the "strong hand" of an able executant. On his terms he seems to have met few gouty composers, although one exception is the German master Hans, living in his old age in Vienna. It was incidentally this extended sense which allowed Byron a full punning effect in his lines on Southey in *The Vision of Judgment*:

Ho nuck lest with his first barometer,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir,
The sense is put just "worn-out", but "allfused into limbo-land". By this dingo-gout had a whole panorama of cultural implication, on which Byron's opplier gleefully trades.

In a fine passage, W. S. Lewis has evoked some of the hidden undertones of the concept:

It is at once common and mysterious. It is given a title, "the". Quick flourish by its and all classes of society take their notations. The great object of its treatment is to drive it into the extremities, for if it settles in at the head or stomach, all is over... The gout is a factor in the national life, not only because of its assaults upon leading ministers of state at moments of crisis, but because of its invasion of men's very souls. It is how and where, a sign of fire, to be courted and adored, attacked and appeased. The eighteenth century is like Chilton crouching in terror as it waits for the gout to crack its web of cramps and fill all its bones with aches. But cruel and capricious as the gout is, it has one sovereign merit: it is jealous of all other diseases and drives them away. This is why we find the gout spoken of with a certain affection.

This tendency is well illustrated in Swift's poem entitled *Dr's Bitchard*:

As if this gout should seize the head,
Doctors pronounce the patient dead!
But if they see, by all their arts,
Effect it on the extremest parts,
They give the sick man joy, and praise
The gout that will prolong his days.

But it is not the only way in which the Hanoverians managed to look on the bright side of gout. Defoe's Colonel Jack even speaks of the "Benefit of a violent fit of the Gout, which (as is allowed by most People), clears the Head, restores the Memory, and qualifies us to make the most... useful Remarks upon our own Actions." This idea of gout as purgative seldom appears in such an explicit form, but it underlines other things which people felt about the malady.

The cultural meaning of gout is related to five separate issues. First, the illness regularly struck those who had been of a robust constitution: this was evident in the well-publicized case of Henry Fielding. It was therefore a malady of milkpots, but a good kind of roast-beef disorder. A corollary was that gout made its most visible impact on the energetic and successful sectors of Hanoverian society. A related point is that one suffered at home. Patients were generally laid up for a month or so, but it was pointless for them to submit themselves to the dubious ministrations of hospitals — for no effective surgery had (or has) been devised. This meant that gout was happily absent from the birth of the clinic. Bath was a kind of walking, or limping, hospital; but in general the gout-stricken carried on their normal lives, with periods of inactivity at home. They kept outside the invalid ghetto.

Second, the fact that the complaint had a hereditary basis rendered it in some respects more distinguished. It made sense in the wider configuration of values and attitudes, which helped to turn the Augustan ethos. Sons waited the onset of gout as a full confirmation of having come into their inheritance. In the first plate of Hogarth's *Marriage à la Mode*, we see the Earl with a pedigree draped at his left side and a gout-stool poised beneath his right foot. Similarly in *Streak House* Sir Leicester Dedlock receives the gout as a troublesome demon, but still a demo of the patrician order... The Dedlock family have communicated something exclusive, even to the levelling process of dying, by dying of their own family gout. It has come down, through the illustrious line, like the plate or the pictures, or the place in Lincolnshire. It is among their dignities.

The fact that the illness was almost exclusively confined to men also has obvious cultural bearings. In a world which operated in such a pervasively and often unconsciously sexist way, this circumstance must have made gout appear more "serious" — something to set against the rage of gynaecological disorders with which women were so irritatingly beset. Again, it meant that the gout could be seen as the mark of power, prosperity and a privileged situation in the social order. And, unlike pox, it was not contracted as a result of sexual congress.

A further consideration is that since lack of exercise was seen to predispose sufferers to the disease, it became identified in some measure as most incident to those working with the brain. Hence, perhaps, the tribute of authors who felt its affliction — of whom more presently. It was a more satisfactory complaint for an intellectual than melancholia, which was hard to distinguish from the spleen of jaded intellectuals or the vapours of an affected young miss. A later French physician gave us his remedy for gout the formula "Faites-le bête et reposez-le bien". There is something so irresistibly flattering in the notion of living in defiance of this rule that gout acquired a patina of sophistication and even (in a dignified Hanoverian way) decadence.

Lastly, the illness, already encountered in Defoe, that gout could be a purgative illness acquired greater currency after the famous episodes involving the elder Pitt. At his first moment of triumph in 1757, he had been laid up with particularly severe attacks; at the very height of the Seven Years War, it is said, he planned strategy from his sick-bed. When the Duke of Newcastle arrived to confer with him in the unheated room, the chill was such that the Duke crept into the open bed. Discussions could then proceed. However, it was an intense bout in 1768 which appeared to rid Pitt of the mortal disease which had clouded his career for some years. Here was proof that gout attacked the greatest and most gifted; that it worked counter to debilitating "nervous" conditions; and that it could reawaken the life-force.

In combination, these factors produced a climate of opinion in which the illness did not seem such a bad thing after all. There is a perpetual deterioration in the eighteenth century to see gout as a blessing in disguise. Wrongly, it is thought to be the preserve of the superior classes: for, though inadequate diet must have made its incidence lower among poorer people, some of their "rheumatic" weaknesses were identical with the gout enjoyed by their betters. Moreover, there is widespread agreement

during the period that the presence of gout means the absence of other, potentially more fatal, conditions.

It is surely not hard to discern the reasons for such amiable self-delusion. Class prejudice is flattered, the social hierarchy vindicated by the very facts of medical practice, the prevailing mares are underlined by vital statistics. Above all, to concentrate on this relatively innocuous disease — occasioning pain and inconvenience, but not in the normal course of events anything like fatal; a mark of maturity, but not at all senile infirmity — made it easier to ignore less accommodable disorders. In a society which had no cure for scourges such as tuberculosis it was consoling to have this more placable enemy. With smallpox not yet wiped out, typhus always liable to mount a violent epidemic, bubonic plague still a threat to be taken seriously, venereal disease all too visibly life in the population — in such a world, with limited aid from physic and no proper sanitary control, it was a boon to find a complaint which observed such a decent manner of proceeding. The suffering individual might cry, "I am not a gouty person!" but gout was a form of invulnerability.

All these observations could be documented from the literary men and women of the age. For example, we find Sir William Jones writing to a correspondent in 1777: "I hope Lord Spencer is free from pain, which is the only evil of the gout, and so evil it certainly is... In other respects, I am told; persons, who have that disorder, have higher spirits and better health." Other sufferers included Fielding, Garrick, Congreve, Lord Orrery and the father of Joshua Reynolds (besides the father of Robinson Crusoe). Sydney Smith had

Beware the stuffed animals

By Redmond O'Hanlon

KENNETH HUDSON:
The Good Museums Guide
277pp, Macmillan, £10.
0 333 28549 2

Tura to the entries under Venice in Kenneth Hudson and Ann Nicholls's magnificent earlier work *The Directory of Museums* (published by Macmillan in 1975) and you will find — besides the names and addresses and opening times of the Doge's Palace and the Treasury of the Basilica San Marco, besides a clear listing of the contents of thirty-one other more or less familiar art galleries and museums — the Cadamuro Morgante... Collection, the Anatomical and the Melegreolo Collections, containing, respectively, Italian bone, Italian and Mediterranean beetles, and just plain beetles, none of which may be admired without an appropriate note.

The same order of painstaking erudition is found in their entries for around 22,000 other institutions across the world. The book is witty, compendious, concise, accurate and relatively cheap. But there are, nevertheless, particularly in the introduction to the section on Great Britain, one or two ominous pointers to the future design of *The Good Museums Guide*:

A museum must make sense by today's standards. It must have, not merely something, but a lot to offer to people of all ages and educational backgrounds, who are used to television styles, who are not afraid to be brutally rude when they are not interested... It is probably true to say that the people who have done more than anybody else to push

several attacks, one of which reached from him "as a ballet from the house of an half-pay captain) dissatisfied, and terrified by the power of colicium." It was Walpole's a particularly fully documented case. His first sudden attack took place in 1760, when he was forty-three. Thereafter his letters are seldom long without some kind of reference. Characteristically, he described it as "unfair" that one of his puny and delicate constitution, living a temperate life, should contract this malady.

It either my father or my mother had had it, I should not dislike it so much. I am herald enough to approve it if descended genealogically; but it is an unwholesome upstart in me... Another plague is, that everybody that ever knew anybody that had it, is so good as to come with advice, and direct me how to manage it; that is, how to contrive to have it for a great many years.

Samuel Johnson had no recorded attack until he reached the age of sixty-seven, which is exceptionally late. In a letter to Thrale he speaks of creeping about and hanging (on the furniture?) "by both hands". There follows the typical coda: "I enjoy all the dignity of lameness. I receive ladies and dismiss them sitting. *Painful preeminence*." A year before his death, Johnson underwent another bout. Like others of his age, he was happy to see gout represented "as an antagonist to the palsy", that is the strokes which he had now come to dread. Like Walpole, he was puzzled to note that neither of his parents had been sufferers, so that it was his "own acquisition".

Finally, there is the case of Benjamin Franklin. I have not traced the onset of the illness, but it was certainly well in evidence by the mid-1770s, when Franklin was

and haul British museums into the modern world were those once (but no longer) scorned Dukes and Earls, who have learnt how to become impresarios of their great mansions and estates.

After a breathy introduction congratulating itself upon introducing such a pioneering work and explaining defensively that "since in the last resort it is the public who pays, it seemed not unreasonable, in researching the *Guide*, to let the public have its say", we are launched into an alphabetical list, town by town, of the four hundred museums which "measured up to the high standards set by Kenneth Hudson". These high standards admit, it should be said at once, the LVC Museum and Art Gallery, Banks, near Brampton, Cumbria, where "LVC stands for LVC Yuan-Chia, the founder and owner"; a converted farmhouse; its collection, comprising 20th century paintings and local and oriental engravings; yet (it excludes, for instance, the Wallace Collection, and the extension of the British Museum (Natural History) at Tinge.

Under the heading "Why they didn't make it", at the back of the book, giving reasons for the exclusion of (unnamed) museums and informing us that "the goodness or badness of a museum is as complex and subtle an affair as the goodness or badness of a human being", we may find comfort for our disappointment by guessing at the reasons, before we decide to congratulate the museums concerned upon their lucky escape. Can it have been the Wallace Collection was left out on the grounds "toilet closed for repairs (South-East)" or "lighting marred by Woolworths lampshades", or merely "publications counter had run out of goldbookers", or even because the "man at the counter appeared shell-shocked by school parties"? Could

But Kenneth Hudson is a distinguished industrial archaeologist and, when the book comes to his own field, his suddenly awakened interest causes him to include his "reporters" out of the machine-shop door or down the nearest mine-shaft: "His own entries are sometimes a delight. There are clear maps of all the museums; a subject index to help readers to pursue a special interest — such as the country (including Ireland), and places. Each of museums, people and places. Each entry is accompanied by a display of symbols to tell you if you will be able to park, to eat, to shop, all, see all within an hour; to find the staff, survive if you are disabled and collect upon your children becoming lost; to find the exhibits to leave you alone for some fraction of your visit. But nothing can redeem the assumption that erudition queried in the cause of editorial democracy thereby become less stupid.

What beautiful children! people used to say. And it was true. She had liked that. It was, who supposed, what almost everyone else was divorced or apart, what kept them together. For how could they bring themselves to up to no period a picture.

Having dinner with you, a friend once told them. Is like an evening.

Vicki Reaver

nearly 70. A had attack at Passy towards the end of 1780 led him to compose his amusing "Diagnosis between Franklin and the Count". It dated "midnight, 22 October 1780". Mankind Count reproaches his victim with his failure to observe promises regarding exercise. She even castigates his fondness for sitting down after dinner at the chess-board. I cannot say if there is anything in this line of diagnostic thinking, except that the musician and chess-player Philidor was another martyr to the disease. But the most indicative passage is the following: "It is not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy, and apoplexy? one or other of which would have done for you long ago, but for me". Hec the fullest expression of medical transference: your actually becomes a physician. Since doctors were not very good at dealing with conditions such as dropsy, it was miraculously self-regulating in a Newtonian or Leibnizian way to find that gout could do a job, and without the payment of fees. (Turgot wrote to Condorcet that his gout had not destroyed his belief in final causes.)

In the nineteenth century, gout could no longer claim this happy pre-eminence among pains. The valedictorian first case: William Bramble subsided into Jos Sedley, trawling forth and fat round Albion Chapel or Joey Bagstock while his pitiful way up and down the streets of Leamington. Gout was left to the care of men on the nicks, like Lydgate; it was a remunerative but low-prestige activity, much as is tending to the rich mansions of Florida today. Of course, gout survived into the Victorian era and does so right up to the present; but it was never again to be such a culturally approved malady — merely a painful one.

The new work contains a great deal of information, with a mass of detail efficiently compressed and clearly presented. It will be an invaluable reference work for persons seriously wishing to know more about modern Poland and not having the time or the linguistic competence to go to the original sources. However, there are some serious gaps which must be briefly stated before a separate consideration of each of the four sections, whose authors, to quote the editor's preface, "express opinions which are entirely their own".

The first gap is the absence of a full bibliography. Two pages of "select bibliography" consisting only of titles in English are of little use. Admittedly many of the non-English sources used are quoted in twenty-two pages of notes in small print. An ideal reader who immediately looks up every reference and notes the source might find this tedious, but ordinary mortals compelled to chase references back until the first mention, with its full particulars, in found, are bound to be exasperated. Of the limited public which this book could reach, quite a large proportion will consist of persons who have some knowledge of Polish and a serious knowledge of the history of Poland or neighbouring countries, or a thorough knowledge of Poland and a marginal interest in history. For them, titles in Polish have no horrors, and it is a great pity that the Cambridge University Press felt unable to include these.

The second, more important gap is the astonishing paucity of attention paid to the role of the Catholic Church in Polish life in these 120 years of history. Mr Pelczynski, faced with the sensational assertion of Catholic loyalty since 1945, may be partly exempted from this criticism. In the other three sections hardly a word is spared for this pervasive influence in Polish society and culture, which was perhaps not prominently visible in political life in the narrowest sense yet indirectly affected it profoundly during both Partition and independence.

There is one problem on which I had hoped for enlightenment from Pelczynski. Perhaps the expectation was unrealistic, but the problem in worth stating. Antisemitism was widespread in Poland — on this all four authors are agreed — but no movement of fascist outlook, based on antisemitic populist demagoguery, similar to those in Romania and Hungary, which had very similar social structures and a comparable proportion of Jews, emerged in Poland. And antisemitic fascist groups did exist, but their following was virtually confined to the urban middle classes, especially — sad (with) to university students. They were unable to win mass support away from the socialist and peasant parties, whose leaders, though they may at times have expressed irritation with Jews, always rejected fascism and always refused political antisemitism. Why was this? Why should Polish socialists and peasant leaders have been more humane than Romanian or Hungarian ones, and why should Polish workers and peasants not have deserted these parties in the misery of the economic depression. In Professor Leslie's section, it is usefully

R. F. LESLIE (Editor):
The History of Poland Since 1863
506pp, Cambridge University Press, £25.
0 521 22645 7

This collective work may perhaps be regarded as in some sense a continuation of the *Cambridge History of Poland*, whose second volume appeared in 1941. That was an excellent work in its day, but more research has been done since then, chiefly in Poland itself, and that country has experienced another forty years of history.

The appearance of this new book is thus timely. It has four authors. R. F. Leslie, the most eminent and longest established British historian of Poland, known for his works on the insurrections of 1863 and 1914, here covers the period from 1863 to 1914. The Great War and the period of independence, 1914 and 1939, are entrusted to Antony Polonsky, who previously published a longer history of Poland between the wars. The author of the four chapters on the conquest, occupation and resistance in the Second World War and the subsequent imposition of a new regime by Soviet arms is Jan Ciechanowski, author of an important and controversial book on the Warsaw Rising of 1944, in which he personally took part. The post-war history of Poland is covered by Z. A. Pelczynski, an Oxford political scientist with special knowledge of Polish affairs. All four authors are thus extremely well qualified for their tasks.

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His treatment of the area of Russian rule is generally better than of the Austrian or Prussian. It is striking that his notes, while referring to numerous works in Polish and a few in Russian, do not include a single title in German. It is difficult to believe that one can study Austrian and Prussian rule over Poles without some reference to official publications, to the proceedings of the Reichsrat, Reichstag or Prussian Landtag, or to the German-language press of Poznan, Vienna or Berlin. It is also striking that the Polish sources quoted consist overwhelmingly of works published since 1945. These include numerous collections of documents from the period 1863-1914, selected by post-1945 Polish historians, as well as secondary works; and of the generally high level of contemporary Polish historical scholarship there can be no doubt. Yet it is strange that there is relatively little reference to works published before 1918, or during the years of independence up to 1939.

Collaboration and insurrection

By Hugh Seton-Watson

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Poland during these fifty years was a most distressful country, few opportunities were given to leading Poles to improve either the material welfare or the cultural autonomy of their compatriots (though more in Austria than elsewhere), and such opportunities as occurred were often missed. Even so, one is impressed by Leslie's inability to say anything good of virtually any one. The protagonists in his account are not persons but abstractions — "the propertied classes", "the lower middle class", "the masses". These undefined, and barely definable, abstractions are made to do, feel and think things, as if they had unified collective minds. Almost everything that politicians do is represented as attributable to base motives of narrow class interest or personal ambition. If they refuse changes they are reactionary; if they bring them about it is solely from fear of the masses. The two outstanding Polish figures, Pilsudski and Dmowski, are given rather short shrift. In particular, Pilsudski appears a concealed snob, as good as a revolutionary, as a socialist, as a soldier or as a patriot. Surely there is more to be said than this? Readers are shown the wars, denied the all.

Mr Pelczynski's chapters are more balanced. His quoted sources are almost exactly divided between three categories — Polish between the wars, Polish since 1945 published in Poland, and Polish or Western published outside Poland since 1945. He is also alone among the contributors in using material in German. His account of the political groups, crises and personalities of the independence period is both lucid and fair. Incidentally, Pilsudski in consequence emerges in a more favourable light in these years — which were the years of his degeneration into a peasant and at times corrupt dictator — than in Leslie's chapters covering his heroic period.

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favour of fascist demagogues? A few superficial answers are easy enough to find, but they merely answer further questions. This problem awaits systematic exploration.

Mr Ciechanowski shows a brilliant mastery of the complex story of the Polish government in exile: the resistance in Poland; the resurrection of the Polish Commonwealth; Pary from its death (literally for most of its then leaders) at Stettin in 1938; the relations between these three and of all of them with the government of the Soviet Union; and the Polish policies (or non-policies) of wartime Moscow, Washington and London. He continues his story to include the establishment of the post-war communist regime and its destruction of all its rivals.

This task has been performed with remarkable economy of words, and clarity. Great efforts are made to be fair to all, and in particular to avoid "anti-communism". Ciechanowski's account and interpretation will be controversial, because so long as there are Poles around to debate them, the meaning of these terrible events will be debated. Many will feel that the reference to Katyn is too slight. The cold-blooded execution, a year or so after capture, of several thousand officer prisoners-of-war is something out of the normal even in the history of war and of man's cruelty to man, and surely something of the sort should have been said. Others will feel that the holocaust of the Jews should have had more space. Yet this reviewer must express, on balance, his admiration for Ciechanowski's attempt at objectivity.

There is, however, a serious omission in his chapters: that of the German factor. The bare facts of conquest, annexation and exploitation are stated. But on German source is quoted — neither official documents from the time, nor the literature published in Germany since 1945; and no attempt has been made to show what life was like for ordinary Poles under German rule, or how so many Poles managed to live the double life of a routine job and participation in resistance activities. Even less is said of the expulsion in 1945-1946 of millions of Germans, many of whom were not guilty of crimes — how many fled and how many were deported, how much was done by Polish or by Russian authorities, how much in cold blood, how the Polish and Russian troops looted and plundered German cities. The German-Polish horror was mutual tragedy, and this is not less true because the Germans were the aggressors and the Poles in the end the victors. The scale and the intensity of the horrors are hard for the inhabitants of an English-speaking country to grasp, and a book intended for such

readers should include these appalling events. The last chapters, by Mr Pelczynski, make up a third of the total, and tell us more about life in Poland than the others. Perhaps the approach of a political scientist, interested in social problems, is preferable, in handling this most recent period, to that of a historian giving first place to political *histoire événementielle*.

The central and controversial feature is the author's admiration for Gomulka, who in fact is the only individual of whom a substantial portrait is given in the whole of this book. Pelczynski makes a good case, rightly stressing Gomulka's courage and his patriotism, admitting his decline in the last years and naming here a resemblance to the career of Pilsudski. (It may, however, be argued that in his attitude to Russia Gomulka was more like Dmowski.)

But another case can be made, and in fairness must be summarized here. Gomulka was a brutal ruler; he showed it in his treatment of Mikolajczyk's supporters and in his handling of the ex-German western territories. He hated intellectuals and free discussion: witness his suppression of *Po Prostu* and of the Warsaw students of 1968 — using lorry-loads of workers brought up to show the proletariat's supremacy over mere loose-mouthed peddlers of words. (They may have been Mosaic's thugs, but they were workers too.) Gomulka became a servile tool of Moscow; witness his action against Czechoslovakia in 1968. He provoked a province in 1938 with Hitler's blessing, but at least Poles had a good claim to Trans-Gizla. In 1968 Gomulka's troops marched into Bohemia shoulder to shoulder not only with the Russians but with Ulbricht's Prussians too.

Mr Pelczynski sees the treaty of 1970 with Federal Germany as a success for Gomulka's foreign policy; surely the truth is that, after years of exploiting his one diminishing asset in Polish opinion — anti-German propaganda — Gomulka was suddenly ordered by Moscow to reverse course because Brezhnev needed German trade and knew how? It is true that the treaty brought German recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontier which previous German governments had refused out of Polish nationalism. But did Gomulka want it? Gomulka's recognition knocked out of his hands the card he had, the German boy. Denunciation of foreign or alien scapegoats was all that was left to Gomulka after a decade of betrayal of those who had brought him to power. And even if the driving force for the expulsions of Jews from Poland in 1968 came from Moscow and his group exploiting

sometimes indiscriminating in his interpretations of the evidence. Thus if a comrade in the Ukraine in 1947 says that funds are urgently needed for reconstruction, while another comrade says that important investment opportunities are being neglected in the Urals, and refers to delays in delivering building materials, what is this supposed to show? Even under Stalin it was possible to ask for plans to be modified, and to blame shortcomings on other branches of the bureaucracy. Of course some of these representations and complaints may have reflected political conflict of an acute kind. At this very period there was the so-called Leningrad affair, which led to the execution of the anti-party leadership in Leningrad, together with the chief planner, Voznesensky. The killing of the chief planner sets up the presumption that it could have been due to a dispute on economic policy. This remains obscure, and Dunsmore is probably right in relating this episode to the power struggle rather than to policy differences.

Dunsmore notes disparities between plan and fulfillment in the 1946-50 quinquennium — producers' goods plans were overfulfilled, those for consumers' goods underfulfilled — and he surprisingly concludes that "the command economy could not be used for achieving even a few clear objectives", and that heavy industry's more rapid growth to these years was "in spite of the leadership's wishes and not because of them" (his emphasis). While in general agreement with his views on the role of Western industrial nations and their subordinate agencies in the formulation and implementation of plans, I feel that Dunsmore overstates his case. He

should remember that many commands which issued from the centre were unpublished, and so we do not and cannot know which changes reflected orders from above and which were due to decisions at lower levels, or to force majeure, such as physical shortages. The Cold War might well have led Stalin and the Politburo to reassign resources towards armaments and so to amend the original five-year plan, and armaments are "heavy industry".

Altogether it would have been astonishing if a plan originally drafted in the immediate aftermath of the war had not been several times amended to the course of its currency. How does the author know whether the "few clear objectives" remained constant? Dunsmore's book is a useful corrective to any ideas of a simple, pure "command-economy" structure, rightly reminding us that expectations and subordinates influence the formation and outcome of commands. He concentrates his analysis particularly on the disparities which relate to regional and industrial-sector policies. He is correct in noting that industrial ministries try to fulfil their plans to the detriment of regional policies, for which they carry no direct responsibility (this is still a problem today). He has gathered much useful material about specific issues discussed and decided in Stalin's last years, years in which the ageing despot must have had a diminishing role in the day-to-day conduct of affairs. Therefore, despite some queries and reservations, this is a welcome addition to the sparse Western literature on this period. One wishes it had a better index. Its price, unfortunately, is too high, but we cannot blame this on its author.

The essence of modern Polish history has often been expressed as an alternation of collaboration with foreign masters and insurrection against them, and neither alternative has done much good. The four contributions are all impressed by the cost and failure of insurrection, but their accounts do not add up to a picture of very solid benefit from collaboration — whether it be called Triple Loyalty, Organic Work or Protestant Internationalism. One essential condition for successful collaboration is a minimum of generosity in the dominant partner, and this has not been available except under Austrian rule, which covered only a rather small part of Poland.

Yet the Poles remain an indestructible nation, in almost all of whom Polish national consciousness and Catholic faith remain ineradicable. Their existence is a source of constant irritation to "modernizing" reductionists of either the Leninist or the Western materialist-hedonist variety, both bound in different ways to the dogma that national consciousness and religion are minor phenomena which economic development will remove.

In those 120 years Poland has undergone immense economic and social change. The Poles have become a "social nation" in the sense that their political and intellectual elite consist largely of persons whose parents were workers or peasants, and that social mobility from the peasantry into the working class, and from the working class into the élite, has vastly increased. The Polish workers have acquired education, social mobility chances

The acceptance world

By Ronald Blythe

THEA THOMPSON
Edwardian Childhoods
232 pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £9.75.
0 7100 0676 4

Introducing her meticulous and wise book, Thea Thompson reminds us of how very little has been done in the way of actual research into the social history of childhood. Even this study did not originate in a plan to examine childhood itself but in a plan to examine the social history of the family. The product of a Social Science Research Council project called "Family Life and Work Experience before 1918", which was carried out by a group of interviewers, and of a second project called "Middle and Upper Class Families 1890-1920", which was undertaken by Mrs Thompson herself. Five of the book's turn-of-the-century childhoods emerged from the first of the studies, four from the second. Mrs Thompson's weaving of these little lives into something as unfragmented, eloquent and impressive as *Edwardian Childhoods* says as much for her sensitivity as for her skill as an oral historian. Casebook-ese is minimal, there is a kind of tender objectivity, and the mixing of certain statements with the information offered by old photographs makes many sharp points.

As befits its title, the social arrangement is vertical, with the boys and girls strung out between gutter (more or less) and palace (comparatively), between Tommy Morgan, flustering from perch to perch in the London rookeries with his "big drinker" parents, and the future Lady Alfrincham, daughter

and wife of Empire governors, who went to a Sunday School given "by the Duchess of Bedford for the little neglected children of the rich". Between these top and bottom rung ciling, for example, the Essex farm-boy, Annie Wilson from the Nottingham terrace, and Florence Atherton, whose parents exchanged roles, her father being "mother" in domestic terms.

Annie is a rung-less child, really, owing to her parents' mixed-class and mixed-faith marriage. Her account of these years shows her socially isolated in a very unusual way. There were varieties of poverty, she says, and here was "ganteel poverty". Next to her comes Geoffrey the mill-owner's son, who should be right in the middle of the ladder, but the mill had collapsed and with it all that was brought up to expect, and so he had to struggle on a level which didn't fit his outlook or his accent. Henry Vigne, born in 1898, is the stockbroker's son. The disadvantage here - had he touched him in any way, which it did not - was the chiefly Victorian divide which arose between the gentry and the businessmen. Henry's family being a compress of aristocracy, gentry and stockbrokers, and his own nature being sanguine, he comes through as the very nice, direct and none too clever lad who, if he lacked much awareness of the inequalities of his world also lacked side. Esther Stokes, the seventh child born in 1895, did react to what her philanthropic mother showed her - sweated industry, half-mad and half-starved children - and there is a noticeable growing enrichment in the story she gives of her girlhood which stems from her being brought up in a rather closed family ethos (her were upper-class Roman Catholics with their own chapel),

and from radical politics.

Jack Yorke was born into the old Yorkshire country gentry and might be said, like Osbert Sitwell but with a different education, to have received his true education at home during the holidays from Eton. His boyhood was one of learning to do the right thing by man and beast as the price for being able to run free on the broad family estates. He is racy and his tale is crammed with a protocol which has been elevated into a morality. He shares, too, with all the other characters Mrs Thompson has chosen, a simplicity, even a transparency, which seems still to contain something of childhood itself. What makes her book so exceptional is that, by getting these nine old men and women to talk about their early years, she and her fellow interviewers have sometimes caught, as well as a full haul of social information, the clear early voice.

Although, as she says, "class is not the only factor that influences the experience of childhood", it is the dominating and inescapable factor here. Religion, which should be beyond it, is particularly bound up with it. Because of the structure of the questioning everybody speaks in strong class terms. Having given their parents' occupations and addresses and details of their own education, they find themselves back in the original class alley which limited and prescribed what they saw and heard until they grew up. Even though most of them know that conditions and manners haven't been like this for many decades, talking about them has a strange power to resurrect in the most vivid detail what hurt, what comforted, and what did nothing but was just a way of doing things. Intriguingly and movingly, the narrator frequently transcends what he is

being asked to tell and all the social detail takes second place to an individuality which so much disciplined recollection allows us to see in the most compelling light.

Such is the childhood of Annie Wilson, who was interviewed by Jenn Jacobs in 1971. Her mother was a chevroner, or embroiderer of flowers and other motifs on stockings, a type of beautiful clucking. She was seventeen when she was married to her eighteen-year-old husband, who came of a long line of home-based hosiery workers and whose entire life was threatened when, after his father's death, his mother returned to the frame on which the garments were made to the factory. Both young parents were illiterate, and their children used to guide their hands when they needed to write their names. They brought up their family in intense privacy. "Don't make neighbours", her mother advised Anna. The fracturing of her parents' domestic home, the letting in of her own gently understanding light on the simplicity and apprehension of their marriage and toll, releases this speaker. She tells us, with the innocence of someone who doesn't know that the subject has ever been mentioned before, how the unprotected workers protected their offspring.

All nine speakers also give a great deal of information on the 1895-1914 period which is not restricted to childhood and which, because of the enormous amount of autobiography and fiction covering this time, is very familiar. But this is right. Childhood exists in scenes and circumstances which the grown-ups have created and which they control. Again, the interviewing was so constructed as to encourage the giving of the maximum number of sociological facts. But Mrs Thompson's sensitive ear catches far

more than these, and *Edwardian Childhoods* is especially memorable for its telling of what are really adult assessments of events which occurred to each speaker before he or she was sixteen. Each reveals, in very different ways, some historical knowledge of these years.

Rich or poor, Edwardian children lived on a very small scale, and reading (it feels like listening to) this contemporary group of early concepts of any notion of the unprejudiced changes which lay ahead. The feeling of having to go over all this old stuff, ground is disturbing. It throws up some of the causes of the failures of the present, and stresses how little we have by way of choice during our formative years. Though what inheritor these Edwardians were, whether of poverty or wealth, there was no doing of what was waiting for you. Each talks, in effect, gives an inventory of everything he was obliged to accept. Mother and father head the list.

The inner life of these children, their spiritual, their emotional and imaginative development, was either untraced-for or unreachable by the study's sociological methods, for although every one of them allows glimpses of the inner life to show when talking of other matters, no reflection is made to recapture it. Their religion is more than a sectarian docking, their friendships and sexuality remain hidden and all the powerful imaginary part of being young is missing. One of the advantages being old is that it sometimes lets see how access to this earliest awareness of things, and more might have been said on the subject. This apart, *Edwardian Childhoods* is a remarkable ordering of recollection.

The Metternich years

By S. S. Praver

FRIEDRICH SENGLE:
Biedermeierzeit
Deutsche Literatur im Spannungsfeld
zwischen Restauration und Revolution,
1815-1848
Volume 3: Die Dichter. 1162pp. Stuttgart:
J. B. Metzler.
4 766 00438 4

Volumes I and II of Sengle's *Biedermeierzeit* were welcomed in the TLS on October 15, 1971 and January 19, 1973; the volume now under review brings to a worthy conclusion a scholarly enterprise of truly heroic dimensions. The literary characteristics of the period between the end of the Napoleonic wars and the revolutions of 1848, which the earlier volumes described and illustrated from an astonishing variety of work and authors, are here traced in the works of fifty-seven writers who range from Grillparzer, Mörike and Stifter to the conservative to Heine and Büchner at the rebellious end, taking in Raimund and Nestoy, Hebel and Gumbel, Platen and Drost, Lenz and Immermann, Goethe and - a welcome surprise - Post/Schaffeld, in between. The vast secondary literature that has grown up around most of these writers is fully taken into account, argued against, or used in support of Sengle's own propositions; and the primary texts are not only analysed and compared with one another, but also again and again allowed to speak for themselves in felicitous, unacknowledged quotation.

"Whoever knows my *Biedermeierzeit*", Sengle tells his readers towards the end of his work, "knows that my own position is neither conservative nor Marxist." Well, Marxist it certainly is not, though like most scholars writing their suit he acknowledges and takes into account the social bases of literature; but it is surely conservative, if that word has any meaning at all. His disapproval of the rebellious young, of recent developments in German literature and scholarship, of journalism and the media as vehicles of literary opinion, of a cultural life that has grown too hectic, is made obvious throughout; and not infrequently his interrupts his loving interpretations of the writings of the Metternich era to draw contemporary lessons. "The question today", he tells us, "is no longer that posed before the 1848 revolution: 'Freedom or Order?' What we have to find today is the correct way to a limited freedom within a beaming order." And again: "Unethical application of liberal principles leads inevitably to communism or fascism. Anarchy - even a half-way anarchy - leads to dictatorship if order is not supported by extraordinary moral force."

Social conservatism is matched by literary-critical conservatism. Sengle's authors are still authors, not nodal points at which various linguistic and social systems intersect; his readers are still readers, not creators of the works they assimilate; his poems, plays and novels are still poems, plays and novels, standing in recognizable cultural traditions, not *Textsorten* or whatever other fashionable terms and notions came up during the ten or more years in which *Biedermeierzeit* was written. But Sengle, like Burke, is an intelligent conservative - "schon ist schön", he quotes from Nestoy; and it is the union of intelligence

able to think through historiographic problems with sensitivity able to respond to a great variety of literary works which makes *Biedermeierzeit* the critical classic it is surely destined to become.

Sengle's intelligence, sensitivity and industry would be ill-rewarded, however, if future scholars contented themselves with open-mouthed admiration of his achievement. Clearly, there will be much to argue against in the next few years. The *Büchner of Biedermeierzeit* seems rather than the Büchner I read and value. Heine is more deeply affected by his Judaism, and more consistent in his development, than he is here given credit for; it does not seem to me as completely nonsensical as Sengle claims to saddle the German Hegelians with some blame for the progress of atheism; "elegance" will not be the adjective that readily commands itself to most readers of Gutzkow's preface; Mörike's poetry contains prescriptions of passion at least as undisguised as Theodor Storm's; not all Mörike's last poems are as "unpolitical" as Sengle claims; Hugo Wolf is a more congenial composer of *Lieder* than would appear from *Biedermeierzeit*; and his services to the appreciation and understanding of Mörike's poetry in non-German countries have exceeded those of any literary critic or expositor. In this third volume, Sengle eloquently defends, against the scholarly tradition in which he himself grew up, the right and duty of literary critics to make value-judgments. He supports such judgments with historical argument and close analyses of the texture and structure of individual works; but it is inevitable, of course, that every knowledgeable reader will find his own valuations affronted from time to time. This is not a defect, but a virtue of the book. It causes us to defend our own case, to

examine the bases of our judgment, and to seek out arguments at least as convincing as those constantly adduced in this volume.

Among the polemical contentions that abound in *Biedermeierzeit* are many which are clearly designed to discredit the early German Romantics; yet strangely enough, the author's own felicitous union of historical and intrinsic criticism shines in perfectly with the principles of Friedrich Schlegel - a man hailed by Welck and Eichner as one of the greatest critics of modern times, yet clearly not part of Sengle's own literary pantheon. Sengle's cultural allegiances are to Wieland, of whom he has written a still unsurpassed biography and whom he affectionately calls "Vater Wieland"; to South-east Germany and Austria, whose creative and critical traditions he champions against those of Central and Northern Germany; and to Stifter, who rightly emerges as the classic writer of the *Biedermeier* age. This does not mean, however, that he is unable or unwilling to acknowledge greatness in authors that stand outside some or all of these traditions. His treatment of Heine is thorough, and as fair, as that of Stifter or of Grillparzer, though some of Heine's work is clearly not to his taste.

Some readers will be disappointed at not finding in Sengle's concluding volume a neat definition of *Biedermeier* that would supersede the definition in *The Oxford Companion to German Literature* to which most English-speaking students rightly have recourse - to say nothing of the English version of Grass's *The Tin Drum*, which renders the word "Biedermeier" first as "the bourgeois-smug" and then "the middle-class paradise". A capsule definition, however, could only falsify the historical argument that we find convincingly pursued throughout the three volumes of *Biedermeierzeit*. Sengle teaches us to recog-

nize a large number of characteristics that may be discovered, in varying quantity, proportion and combination, when we read the fifteen authors he discusses so thoroughly and so stimulatingly in his final volume. Such characteristics may be formal, or thematic, or both; they range from a deliberate intermingling of stylistic levels, registers, "tones" and genres, or "realism of detail", to an appreciation of the virtues of the extended family, the "Grossfamilie", that might include a whole region or province. Sengle teaches us to see the ways in which even Heine and Büchner paid tribute to contemporary tastes; the interconnections of literary theory and practice among authors of very different social and political principles; the characteristics of style and thought that link even the most disparate of the many writers he treats. He tells us much that is relevant about the education and training of his chosen authors, including their study of traditional rhetoric; about their religious background and affinities; and about the illumination that may be derived from a closer attention than usual to the ways in which their contemporaries read and criticized their writings.

Above all, he teaches us to recognize the literature of the Metternich era as part of the development of Romanticism in Europe; to see how many elements of the earlier eighteenth century still survived or were deliberately resuscitated between 1815 and 1848; and to distinguish the *Biedermeierzeit* from the period of programmatic Realism and Naturalism which followed. I cannot imagine any historian or student of German literature, or anyone interested in the cultural life of Central Europe, who would fail to profit from a thorough study of this impressive example of German literary scholarship at its best.

Something in common

By Evan Jones

ALAN DUNDES
Interpreting Folklore
304pp. Indiana University Press.
£15 (paperback, £6).
0 253 20240 X

In his preface, Alan Dundes complains, not unfairly, that folklorists have too much contented themselves with recording and classifying, too little engaged themselves with making sense of their materials. *Interpreting Folklore* is a collection of pieces in which Professor Dundes has at one time or another essayed to repair this omission; not immediately, the book is offered as in some way exemplary.

But exemplary of what? Dundes is distressed by the failure of folklorists adequately to define their field of enquiry:

"Thus far in the illustrious history of the discipline, not so much as one genre has been completely defined. . . . A standard work on the proverb begins with the statement that 'The definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking'. . . . The same deplorable situation is found in discussions of other genres."

Therefore he begins with an essay boldly asking, "Who are the Folk?" Like other recent scholars, he rejects the old view, at once sentimental and patronizing, that the "folk" are, with only a few quaint survivals, a phenomenon of the past: "If a modern folklorist accepted the nineteenth-century definition of the folk as illiterate, rural, backward-peasants, then the study of the lore of such folk might well be strictly a salvage operation and the discipline of folklorists might in time follow the folk itself into oblivion. . . . To draw attention to the tendency of recent folklorists to speak as if the main function of a 'folk' is to serve an academic 'discipline', and one especially in the 'United States' (leaving to wider recognition, is of course to caricature them; there is nothing so foolish about the eagerness with which a writer like Dundes recognizes 'folk' manifestations all about him).

"These considerations push him to a 'definition' sufficiently embracing: 'The term 'folk' can refer to any group of people, whatever, who share at least one common factor. It does not matter what the linking factor is, but what is important is that a group formed for whatever reason will have some traditions which it

calls its own. In theory a group must consist of at least two persons. . . ."

Afraid that this last note might sound unreasonably dogmatic, he is prepared to consider the possibility that one person might constitute a folk, but decides that while "Individuals do have idiosyncrasies . . . at least two individuals would have to share them before I would be comfortable in calling such behaviour traditional or folk". The use of that word "traditional", incidentally, is really a hangover from older views of what constitutes folklore: it occurs apocryphally in *Interpreting Folklore* as a word of nervous use, but that last sentence suggests adequately enough how leached of meaning it has become.

It is salutary to be told that we are old folk, but it does not much help to delineate a field of enquiry. As it happens *Interpreting Folklore* does rather less to give sharper definition to what we might understand by "folk".

The second essay, "Texts, Texts and Contexts", considers the inadequacy of previous attempts to isolate the essential nature of folklore: from arguing that "one could with reason say that definitions of folklore which depend completely upon such terms as 'oral', 'tradition' and 'transmission' are of questionable utility". Dundes proceeds to the draconian conclusion that "The problem then of defining folklore boils down to the task of defining exhaustively all of the forms of folklore. Once this has been accomplished, it will be possible to give an authoritative definition of folklore". It is at this point, alas, that he laments that no genre of folklore has yet been defined; and the hapless reader can only reflect that since there seem to be no criteria for deciding what might be a "form" or "genre" of folklore, its conclusive "enumerative definition" is not something hopefully to be awaited.

If we watch Dundes's procedure in subsequent essays, we will conclude that "folklore" seems most of the time to mean something like "popular culture"; to remark that it is not of course an advance in precision, but it gives a sense of the difference between the writer of the opening essays, intent on the definition of a discipline of "folkloristics", and the subsequent "interpreter" who will turn anything to use in pursuing whatever question has engaged his interest. Dismissingly, at one point in his third essay "Projection in Folklore: A Plea for Psychoanalytic Semiotics", Dundes declares that "my plea for psychoanalytic semiotics is based primarily upon folklore only because I am most familiar with folkloristic data". It is the idea of projection in the psychoanalytic sense that interests him, not the "folkloristic data", and in discussing American reactions to the first moon-landing in this essay he

moves, as he concedes, outside even his own generous sense of "folklore".

Psychoanalytic ideas, especially, "projection", figure very prominently in these essays; and if I were a librarian faced with the task of classifying one of the more substantial pieces, "A Psychoanalytic Study of the Bullroarer", I suppose I should hesitatingly file it under Cultural Anthropology. Thus Dundes's own essays - and his references - remind us that if "folklorists" have been too content merely to collect and classify (and interestingly enough this applies more to modern folklorists than to the nineteenth-century pioneers), psychoanalysts and anthropologists have not been loath to interpret "folklore". Unless Dundes brings new skills or new kinds of evidence as a "folklorist", is there after all anything novel in his offering?

In this context it is perhaps worth noticing that the essay "The Number Three in American Culture" is reprinted from an earlier Dundes collection subtitled "Readings in Cultural Anthropology"; worth noting, too, that the present book has been so hastily put together that when other essays refer to this one, as at least two do, the

reader is directed back to the earlier book. In short, *Interpreting Folklore* does not really cohere as an intellectual exercise: though one can, indeed, see why each piece was chosen for inclusion under the common rubric, the final effect is stubbornly one of miscellany.

Apart from the initial "theoretical" essays, the contents might roughly be divided into two kinds, the substantially scholarly essays working on the basis of previous interpretative literature (the "armchair" essays), and the ones in which Dundes is working from relatively immediate observation of society (his "field" essays). Though the quality varies greatly, by and large the "armchair" essays are the better, and the two most substantial pieces in this kind, "We and Dry, the Evil Eye: An Essay in Indo-European and Semitic Worldview" and "The Hero Pattern and the Life of Jesus", are alone enough to make the book worthwhile.

The "field" essays, although apparently diverse, are marked by common traits. To no degree surprising in the light of the influence in theoretical essays on the diversity of the folk and the need to see "lore" in

context, these simply take "American" culture as their target, and tend indiscriminately to make as evidence anything that comes to hand. Again, Dundes at times seems intent rather on *selling* than on exploring his cultural diagnoses, and the level of argument suffers grievously - in the essay "Thinking Ahead: a Folkloric Reflection of the Future Orientation in American Worldview", for instance, we find "But whether one buys now and pays later or pays now to receive later . . . the same future orientation pervades the philosophy", while the same essay, rightly taking whatever it can find (much of it distinctly American) as evidence of Dundes' own orientation, proceeds as if Dundes had never noticed the American (though not necessarily American) penchant for nostalgia: "evidence" in these essays points all one way.

And so it is impossible here to discuss the pieces severely: one might risk, however, this regretful generalization that the more conservatively studious Professor Dundes's essays are, the more satisfactory; the more they are given to a consciousness of their own novelty, the more footless they tend to be.

The "field" essays, although apparently diverse, are marked by common traits. To no degree surprising in the light of the influence in theoretical essays on the diversity of the folk and the need to see "lore" in reliable safety margin . . . which we can use when we have need and can discard all other times".

A woman's right to work is the central - and still relevant - theme of the book. The dominant facts of women's work were low pay and low status, and the author examines how the argument that a woman's vocation is motherhood, and her place in the home, was used to underline the economic view of women as dependants. This justified the low pay and acted as a brake on their employment opportunities. The familiarity of this today encourages one to accept her view of the war as "one phase in a continuum".

By dissecting the responses of the main groups involved, Gail Brynson highlights the ambiguities in their positions. The patriotic press was congratulatory, frequently praising of women doing men's work. Craft trade unions in the munitions industry opposed women replacing men (because women's low wages threatened men's wages and their job status), but also for family allowances, maternity benefits, pensions and nurseries. Without these, women would contribute to the war effort, as mothers and as workers, as they were during the war.

The voice of the Centre

By Jill Stephenson

DAVID BLACKBURN:
Class, Religion and Local Politics in Württemberg Germany

The Centre Party in Württemberg before 1914.

269pp. Yale University Press. £12.
0 300 02454 9

For those historians mesmerized by the conventional right-to-left political spectrum, the Centre Party in Germany has been perhaps not so much a puzzle as an embarrassment. Some have taken the line of least resistance and virtually ignored it, while others have explained its posture and policies as either purely opportunistic, or the malice of its role as the political representative of the Catholic Church in a country where Protestants were in a two-to-one majority. David Blackburn has decided to tackle the issue head-on. While his purpose is to assess the nature and significance of the Centre as the pivotal political party at Reich level in the quarter century before the First World War, his general aim is to show how the Centre Party was not merely a party to pursue his detailed argument about the Centre through a local study, by charting the fortunes and failures of the Centre Party in Württemberg - where, as it happened, Protestants were again in a two-to-one majority. For Blackburn belongs to the younger generation of British historians of Imperial Germany who have come to reject the "new orthodoxy" formulated by the (then) younger generation of German scholars in the 1960s and early 1970s. In the wake of the "Fischer controversy", if "make way, you old ones" might well be revived as their slogan, "please" as he says himself, his approach is "pragmatic", rather than "polemical", which is more than can be said for that of some of his colleagues.

Nevertheless, David Blackburn is firm in his rejection of a view which portrays the political and social pattern of the German Empire as a congealed mass, and of the neo-conservative belief in the cynical manipulation of the Catholic Church by the ruling class whose divergent interests were reconciled in a determined policy of maintaining the Kaiserreich status quo. He aligns himself with those who stress the importance of pressure groups, often representing an economic interest, in influencing the policies of political parties - besides, but also including, the Centre from the 1890s. To this, he adds the dimension of local, even parochial, loyalties which, more effectively mobilized because of the communications revolution in the later nineteenth century, were able to make an indelible impression on constituency party organizations and candidates in an age of universal male suffrage. By this interpretation, the parties became the point of contact between central government and the electorate, making the government aware of the strength of popular feeling on everything from the tariff to education, from opposition to margarine to a butter-substitute to demands for special taxes on department stores.

But as a party which, from the 1890s, helped to sustain the government's majority in the Reichstag, the Centre also had to represent government policies to its supporters as being in their best interests, even when they manifestly were not. Worse, the different pressures groups comprising the Centre constituency at the turn of the century had irreconcilably divergent interests: "the retailer who had usurped the artisan's traditional position and stepped into the growing gap between producer and consumer" found to his dismay that artisans flocked to department stores to shop, in spite of Centre propaganda urging them "to buy at home, not from the Jew". Blackburn's analysis of the conflicting aspirations of the Centre's supporters in Württemberg admirably and lucidly illustrates both popular preoccupations and prejudices and also the extent to which the Centre Party had to represent and even magnify these in a period of economic and political flux when politicians were touting for custom among voters who, however primitively, perceived that they were in a seller's market.

It is in this picture which convinces Blackburn, and with which he aims to convince us, that the Centre Party was much as other political parties to Imperial Germany and was not merely the political instrument of the Catholic Church. He might have added that it is the "history from above" approach, with which he and his contemporaries take issue, which has reinforced the assumption that a party representing Catholic interests must necessarily represent those of institutional Catholicism. This same assumption underlay the *Kulturkampf* of the 1870s and was perpetuated by liberals, chiefly, who leveled charges of "desecration" and "ultramontanism" at the Centre twenty and thirty years later.

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state and national parliaments the Centre acted as a watchdog to ensure that traditional Catholic preserves were safeguarded and to work for the restoration of sequestered rights. Even if it assumed this role for other than purely sectarian reasons, as Blackburn persuasively argues, surely its preoccupation with appealing reforms - in education, in the marriage laws, in communal practices, to name but a few - derived from a "mentality" inculcated into the Catholic leaders and supporters of the Centre from earliest childhood by the Church? Blackburn admits, with disarming honesty, that he is now "less willing to concede . . . about the importance of the Catholic Church in the fabric of daily and political life among Centre supporters" than he was. But where is the chapter on "The Centre and the Catholic Church" to match those on the Centre's relations with rival political parties and to sustain his thesis that "there was a marked de-chlorination of the Centre from the 1890s in particular"? Where is any discussion of the "dechlorination" process under the aegis of interest groups? To immunize Catholics against "materialism"? The absence of an evaluation of the Catholic sub-culture - parallel to the Socialists' - is a disappointment in this penetrating, good-natured and persuasive analysis. Again, discussion of the Centre's attachment to the idea of the "corporate representation of economic interests" might have alluded to the favour accorded to it by Pope Leo XIII - whether to acknowledge or deny his influence.

Blackburn's detailed examination of the development of the Centre in Württemberg convincingly demonstrates the weaknesses in the theory of "social imperialism", which, with all its refinement, has only ever been a blunt instrument for dissecting as various social structures as Imperial Germany. The "alienation" of Catholics from "Prussianism" may not have mattered in the 1870s when the Centre was an "enemy of the Reich", but it nevertheless threatens the credibility of sweeping generalizations about the "feudalization" of the bourgeoisie. For Blackburn, the 1890s rather than the 1870s is the critical transitional period to Imperial German and Centre Party development; with a new generation of Centre leaders convinced that the emancipation of Catholics from civil and professional discrimination would come only through the ending of "the stigma of hostility to the Reich with which Catholics had been burdened since the *Kulturkampf*". The "two hundred per cent German" Centre thus found its political orientation largely determined: it could not align itself with the other parish party, the SPD,

because that would merely have confirmed prejudices which it was explicitly set on eliminating, and also because Centre leaders regarded the Socialists as "negative" and "irresponsible".

Much of David Blackburn's discussion focuses on the rightward progress of the Centre, and he is convincingly shown how declining electoral appeal among urban Catholics - manual workers and the "new" middle class of white-collar workers alike - reinforced a tendency apparent in the early 1890s for the Centre to promote agrarian interests. The need to compete with a new peasant party drove the Centre into an extravagant and demagogic (no overstatement) attempt to outbid the peasant party, to retain the rural vote, and at the same time to reconcile with it an effective appeal to "urban, stock-raising and public" in the "old" middle class. The rightward progress of the Centre was therefore determined by the interests and aspirations of the constituencies to which it could most effectively appeal from the 1890s; but this looks like a circular argument when it

becomes apparent that the Catholic peasantry and "old" middle class were the beneficiaries of the distinctive Catholic "mentality" which stressed "rural virtue" and sanctified urban society and its effects. The Centre had perhaps, as Blackburn argues, evolved in the 1890s from being a defensive, confessional party to being a modern, interest-group-based, political party; it may not be fanciful to suggest that the Vatican took belated revenge for this to July 1933. But it remained a party that represented the interests of some Catholics, arguably the most "backward" Catholics, so that it did not justify its leaders' claims to be a "true people's party". As Blackburn shows, the narrowness of its appeal to the 1900s forced it to exclude extravagant and often contradictory propaganda to try to retain what support it had: the direction of that propaganda, with its constant theme of the threat from the left, ensured that the Centre increasingly gravitated towards the Conservatives. Before the outbreak of the First World War, the Centre had managed to find a niche in the right-to-left political spectrum.

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The underlying Will

By Patrick Gardiner

D.W. HAMLYN
Schopenhauer
181 pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £9.75.
0 7100 0322 9

Throughout most of his life Schopenhauer suffered neglect by contrast with other leading philosophers in Germany, and especially with his arch-enemy Hegel. By a curious irony a somewhat similar fate appears to have befallen him — at any rate so far as the English-speaking world is concerned — in the present century as well. The past two decades have produced a host of critical studies dealing with different aspects of Hegelian thought, and their relevance to current philosophical and methodological disputes. It cannot be said, however, that there have been many signs of a corresponding resurgence of interest in Schopenhauer's writings. Although it is true that some of his ideas tend to be referred to from time to time in connection with Wittgenstein's intellectual development, few attempts have been made to assess what he wrote in his own right or to treat it as offering a serious contribution to recurring issues in the history of philosophy. More typically, Schopenhauer's name continues to be found embedded in footnotes to discussions of broad nineteenth-century trends, such as romanticism and nihilism; yet, while he certainly played a part in the evolution of these, they cannot properly be regarded as illustrative of his chief concerns or as his principal claims to importance as a thinker.

Such an attitude of relative indifference seems undeserved from more than one point of view. Considered in the context of his time Schopenhauer's main work, *Die*

Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, can be seen in many respects to display a remarkable presence; and even from a present-day standpoint anyone who reads it can hardly fail to be struck by the manner in which it manages to embrace within an economical conceptual framework an extraordinary variety of themes relating, not only to metaphysics and epistemology, but also to ethics, aesthetics and the philosophy of mind. However deep the differences on other counts, in its range and ambition it can at least be said to bear comparison with Hegel's own writings; it is comparable, too, both in the sensitivity shown to some of the problems which the Kantian philosophy left in its wake and in the perceptiveness Schopenhauer habitually exhibits when describing the darker currents of human feeling and motivation — it was not for nothing that Freud singled him out as a precursor. His work is, moreover, infused with a visionary quality that manifests itself most obviously in his conception of the world as the phenomenal expression of an underlying volitional force and in the consequences he drew from this. But it is to be discerned as well in particular passages that are intrinsically memorable for the way in which they incorporate striking theoretical insights by means of some apt image or simile: when formulated with his customary elegance and lucidity, these are capable of leaving a vivid and lasting impression upon the mind.

At the same time, it must be admitted that the very clarity of Schopenhauer's style is apt to expose difficulties in his system which obtrude more sharply than they might have done if he had employed the opaque and mystifying mode of expression favoured by a number of his German contemporaries. As David Hamlyn points out in his carefully argued study, Schopenhauer's philosophy was initially presented within a scheme of ideas that owed much to Kant and part-

icularly to the latter's "transcendental idealism". The world as we ordinarily perceive and comprehend it is a world of "appearances" or (to Schopenhauer's terminology) "representations", not of things as they are in themselves; it is to be construed as the product of the intellect working upon data provided by sensation, and as such it can be affirmed to exist only for a conscious experiencing subject endowed with a certain set of mental faculties.

As he proceeds, however, it becomes clear that Schopenhauer's own outlook diverges from the Kantian at a number of crucial junctures. Thus the justification he himself provides for endorsing a fundamentally idealist standpoint rests in part upon an appeal to the physiological functions of the human brain; yet, despite his suggestions to the contrary, such an argument has no analogue in the Kantian account of what is involved, nor is it evident — at least as he presents it — that it constitutes an acceptable or even a coherent position. Furthermore — and again unlike Kant, in whose theory the concept of "things in themselves" played a purely negative or limiting role so far as our knowledge was concerned — Schopenhauer insists that it is possible to identify the true *Ding an sich*, or essence of the world, with what he terms "the will"; for this, as opposed to the phenomenal or "representational" knowledge we possess of our bodies and their movements, is something of which each individual is directly and immediately aware through his inner consciousness of himself as an active being or agent.

But here, too, problems arise. There are obstacles to accepting without reservation the ontological claims about our fundamental nature which Schopenhauer seeks to derive from our (admittedly special) consciousness of agency, and these seem to multiply when he goes on to treat the "double knowledge" we have of ourselves under the dual aspects of will and representa-

tion as affording a key to the interpretation of reality as a whole.

Difficulties of the sort mentioned inevitably confront one who sets out to offer a balanced critical survey of Schopenhauer's thought and Hamlyn shows no inclination to try to gloss them over. On the contrary, and as befits a contributor to Routledge's "Arguments of the Philosophers" series, he energetically applies himself to the task of unravelling the skeins of Schopenhauer's reasoning and of patiently testing the various strands for strength. If on occasions — as with the account given of sense-perception — he is driven to regard what he finds as being radically confused, he shows himself concerned elsewhere to do justice to the elements in Schopenhauer's discussions which strike him as genuinely valuable or fruitful. Thus he has good things to say about his subject's first publication, the undervalued *Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, while in the case of the main work he rightly picks out Schopenhauer's effort to "grapple with the nature of agency" as being of crucial importance. Not only does it constitute a prime source of his metaphysics; it also merits serious consideration on its own account as representing an early attempt to come to grips with a group of intricate problems which in recent years have increasingly attracted the attention of analytical philosophers. The tendency to overlook or misconceive the character of human action has been a recurrent one in the history of empiricist epistemology; whatever obscurities may surround his own handling of the topic, it is to Schopenhauer's credit that he recognized and helped to set in a fresh light some of the central issues involved.

Even so, it is arguable that Schopenhauer's preoccupation with action and the will was at the same time symptomatic of more far-reaching concerns. For it is not just in what he writes about agency that

one senses a tension between, on the one hand, his conception of the will as matter for us from within, as particular self-conscious subjects of experience, and, on the other, the way they may be understood to stand from an external point of view, where we appear as "objects among objects", inhabiting a common physical realm of law-governed things and events. The tantalizing question of whether our rival standpoints, each implicit in aspects of our general thought and practice, can be satisfactorily reconciled in terms of a perspective that somehow transcends them seems to haunt Schopenhauer's philosophy at a very deep level and to manifest itself in a variety of forms and connections. The desire, moreover, to accommodate both of them within his system may go part of the way towards explaining his habit, which has disconcerted commentators, of apparently oscillating between an uncompromisingly idealist position and one that is more suggestive of a kind of physiologically orientated materialism.

At the end of his book Hamlyn himself touches upon such considerations, noting among other things that there are times when Schopenhauer's initial idealism gives the impression of having faded into the background, so that "it is almost as if that part of his theory had been forgotten". One may wish, however, that Hamlyn had explored this and related points further, for it might have enabled him to communicate more comprehensively what it was that ultimately inspired Schopenhauer's imaginative but paradoxical vision of the world. He accurately identifies the problematic features of that vision, bringing them into sharp focus. Where his appreciative but rather strident interpretation appears to me less satisfying is in showing how they arose and why they should have been so pervasive in the work of a philosopher of Schopenhauer's undoubted stature and penetration.

Dr Midgley's own second contribution, "Gene-Juggling", on attack on Richard Dawkins's *The Selfish Gene*. She has excised some of the more gratuitously abusive remarks that accompanied the article's first appearance in *Philosophy*, but even so her language for the Dawkins jangler is rather milder. She is quite prepared to hold that genetic factors are among those affecting our behaviour, and that their effects are best isolated by assuming other things equal. But none of this prevents us from holding that other things are rarely if ever equal, that all kinds of other factors affect our behaviour, nor from holding whatever view we choose on the question of whether any of our behaviour is ultimately uncaused.

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Playing to the people

By Irving Wardle

CATHERINE ITZIN
Stages in the Revolution
Political Theatre in Britain Since 1968
399 pp. Eyre Methuen, £9.95 (paperback, £4.95).
0 413 39180 9
SANDY CRAIG (Editor)
Dreams and Deconstructions
Alternative Theatre in Britain
192 pp. Amber Lane Press, £7.95 (paperback, £4.95).
0 906399 19 X

1968, when everything else happened as well, is usually claimed as the birth year of alternative theatre in Britain, but its origins lie in the late 1950s with Centre 42 and the attempt by Arnold Wesker and his associates to take the means of artistic production into their own hands. For the group that began emerging ten years later, whose diversity defied even Sandy Craig's compilation, this was the primary condition of work. With the warning example of the Osborne generation before their eyes, they had an acute sense of the process Cooper summed up as "garret: Oddon: Pere Lachaise". They were not anxious to get under a snug umbrella, nor indeed were they concerned with buildings. They were interested in ideas: ideas of community work, political action, multi-media experiment, audience contact and minority expression. If buildings followed, well and good; if not, England was well stocked with pubs, factory canteens, and streets.

On these terms they survived and proliferated on a scale which can only be compared with that of the Workers' Theatre Movement of the 1930s; a comparison that does not justice to the growth from half a dozen fringe groups in 1968 to Catherine Itzin's 1978 total of "over a hundred alternative theatre companies... plus another fifty or more young people's theatre companies". The alternative theatre also involved alternatives to theatrical careerism; as in the case of highly respected playwrights like John Arden and John McGrath who turned their backs on the London mainstream in favour of political work in remote parts of Ireland and Scotland. Most important, it involved an alternative audience. The old dream of reaching a wider public than the unchanging middle-class minority at last started coming true with work commissioned by trade unions and shows for tenant associations, building allos, factory occupiers, squats, and other venues for people who never go to the theatre.

Catherine Itzin is clearly right in locating the central impulse of "the alternative decade" in its politics: whilst it is one reason why so much less publicity has been bestowed on it than on the earlier protest and absurdist movements, which had the decency to maintain the old division between art and life, its leading writers are

familiar, especially those like David Edgar and Trevor Griffiths who have had no qualms about crossing the commercial boundaries for the sake of reaching television and mainhouse audiences. So too are political intentions are off-set by their aesthetic novelty. But there remains a mass of work of which most people are only partially, if at all, aware.

Stages in the Revolution is the first comprehensive study, and is a remarkable feat of organization. It runs through the decade year by year, each section introduced with a summary of key events before focusing on a particular group of artists; and interweaving chapters on writers and groups with chapters on subsidy, Equity, and the development of such institutions as the Independent Theatre Council and the Theatre Writers' Union, whose muscle the author convincingly demonstrates. The result is not neat; but considering the sprawl of the material it is a model of selective lucidity. Wherever possible, Miss Itzin introduces her subjects in their own words; very rarely advancing opinions of her own on their quality. As men like David Mercer and David Edgar are a good deal more articulate than some others, the method may have led to some injustice by self-promotion. (In the case of Edward Bond's cloudy groupings towards a view of Western man, one only hopes that readers will have seen his plays first.) On the whole, the groups come over more vividly than writers; which is as it should be, as writers are already accessible from other sources.

Two main patterns emerge from the book. First, a spectrum of work bounded on one side by Marxist groups like Red Ladder and 7.84 which put their ideology into words, and at the other by community ventures like Inter-Action and the Deptford Albany which embody their poli-

tics in acts of social intervention. Second, a developing emphasis on community work at the expense of agitation — as variously evidenced in the mid-1970s switch from agit-prop to naturalistic analysis, the humane approach of the later groups (such as North West Summer), and the gloom concluding remarks from David Hare on the dubious achievements of ten years' political theatre. True to her impartial method, Miss Itzin does not take issue with him; but — so far as the theatre and its audience are concerned — the whole book provides her answer.

This is a necessary document. But if only someone had bothered to write such a book about the 1930s, there might have been less arrogance among Miss Itzin's contributors — Howard Brenton, for one, who tells us that Joan Littlewood's "only models were West End theatres... The notion of how to do it on a shoestring was not available." If Littlewood had enjoyed a fraction of the subsidy that Brenton and his contemporaries have taken for granted, there would have been another story to tell.

Dreams and Deconstructions takes a wider view of the alternative scene with consequent blurring of focus. Weakly edited by Sandy Craig, who contributes three chapters in bigoted *Time Out* style, it consists of overlapping essays by various hands, on feminism, politics, children's theatre, actors' workshops, theatre in education, regional rep, and new writers, some of the pieces empty opinionated, some druggily summarizing. Nareem Khan's essay on ethnic theatre is well argued, and written with real authority. But the best piece in the book is John Ashford's brief introduction to Performance Art, which sets up the background and the personnel, laments the critics' failure to come to terms with the subject, and then abandons it as indescribable.



This drawing of Heinrich Heine is taken from a collection of Hans Fronius's *Imaginaire Portraits* (149 pp. Graz, Vienna, Cologne: Styria, 3 222 11291 6).

The biological take-over bid

By Paul Seabright

ASHLEY MONTAGUE (Editor)
Sociobiology Examined
355 pp. Oxford University Press, £12.50 (paperback, £2.95).
0 19 50271 1 6

The anxiety over the impact of new technology on jobs has been provided with an amusing parallel within the academic profession itself by the sociobiology debate. In 1975 Edward O. Wilson argued (*Sociobiology: the New Synthesis*) for a "biologization" of the social sciences, for a replacement of anthropologists, sociologists and even moral philosophers, not (yet) by microprocessors but by the next best thing, human ethologists and evolutionary biologists: "the time has come for ethics to be removed temporarily from the hands of the philosophers and biologized". This claim was accompanied by a series of campaign diagrams, showing the expansion of sociobiology into adjacent territory, and by predictions of the progressive conquest of anthropology, sociology and ethics. (And indeed, one is prompted to ask, why stop there? May we not look forward to such exciting disciplines as biotechnology and literary biocriticism?) The response of many academics to this threat was fairly predictable: they tossed off a ball of criticism, some of it very abusive.

Just how comprehensive is the claim that ethics and the social sciences are effectively the continuation of biology by other means? On one view (much the less interesting) the conquest is meant to be complete. No residue of these disciplines will be left. On the other view, the claim is simply that sociobiology has something to say about all human behaviour, so that it is not a criticism to point out that biology is far from being the whole story.

Uncertainty as to the extent of sociobiology's ambitions has dogged the work of both sociobiologists and their critics, and it is the cause of a central difficulty of purpose in the work under review. This collection of essays on the biological, anthropological, psychological and philosophical impact of sociobiology sets out to examine the subject with the forty clear intention of cutting it firmly down to size. This is a pity, for with one or two notable exceptions many of the contributors end up concentrating on the mistakes and extravagances — and there have been many — of the less interesting work in this field. In these circumstances it is hard for them to avoid writing the sins of some of its individual practitioners upon the

discipline itself. We are left rather in the dark about what sociobiology can do, having been told so exhaustively what it cannot.

The human species' unique capacity for language and culture is frequently urged against sociobiology in these essays. It is a little hard to know what to make of this claim, for it is used with some ambiguity. It may mean simply that sociobiology is not the only or even the most important discipline we need when studying human behaviour. Thus Derek Freeman concludes in his essay that "sociobiological theory per se, being restricted to purely genetic processes, is categorically unfitted for the comprehensive scientific study of the evolution and behaviour of... the human animal" (my italics). But this point, though surely true, is scarcely a damning criticism after all, no other discipline is comprehensive in his sense. The fact that natural selection is doubtless operated upon by as well as on the rest of us does not mean that sociobiology will ever exhaust the point or purpose of poetry, but nor is it emasculated as a discipline by its failure to do so. It is simply doing a different job.

The alternative view of the implications

Claims to power

By J. A. Hall

J. G. MERQUIOR
Rousseau and Weber: Two Studies in The Theory of Legitimacy
275 pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £12.50.
0 7100 00513 X

This book is the first instalment of J. G. Merquior's ambitious project of a sociologically informed history of "legitimacy concepts". The idea of legitimacy is generally familiar to us in its Weberian guise, and the first part of this book in effect considers Rousseau from the standpoint of Weber. Here Merquior suggests that the *Social Contract* is best read as arguing that legitimacy can only be secured in modern society by means of participatory democracy. He argues that the nostalgic anarchism in Rousseau's thought is obsessed with the moral problem of finding suitable social support for the honest and sincere self. But for all this Merquior follows J. R. P. MacIntyre in arguing that this defence of participatory

democracy is cogent and far from culture-bound. The discussion of Rousseau is impressive in its own right, but the core of the book results from, as it were, turning the tables so as to consider Weber from the perspective of Rousseau. This allows Merquior to emphasize the curious fact that participatory democracy has no place in Weber's celebrated typology of legitimate authority (traditional, charismatic and rational-legal), and he tries to explain why this is so.

The ambiguities inherent in Weber's concept of legitimate authority are usefully explored. The threefold typology itself consists of the claims made to power from above by rulers; such claims are held to be legitimate by a "belief in the rule" whereby Weber assumes that the ruler's claims will come to be believed in by those below. This position is rightly criticized and dubbed "culturalist". Merquior dislikes it most, of course, since it takes any idea of legitimacy being created by democratic means from below. He is, moreover, much less than pertinent to say about the difficult question (in) in practice to most social orders.

But Merquior's purpose is not in any way to belittle Weber. In a useful discussion

of human culture, which surfaces from time to time in this collection, seems to deny that sociology is a discipline that can be applied to human beings at all. Peter and Peirysak urge that "the positive limitations of sociology can only contribute to the investigation of a cultureless being — a being non-existent". And S. A. Barnett closes an essay that is full of important detail about animal behaviour with the argument that sociobiology must ultimately be rejected because it is incompatible with two theses of philosophical indeterminism, which is held by "nearly all adults". I fear this will prove an unfruitful gum-tree to ascend. For one thing, if it is true that sociobiology disregards "features that distinguish the human species sharply from all others, and which allow us to make decisions" if, in other words, animals are determined while humans are not, where in evolution is the decisive break supposed to have come? In any case, the question of whether determinism is true is surely irrelevant to the more germane question of whether, insofar as there are causes of our behaviour, these are primarily biological or not.

In fact, her essay serves as an admirable yardstick of reasonableness by which to judge the other contributions, and they do not all measure up well; one of the worst is

unecessarily dominate these essays. Some sociobiologists may be genetic determinists, but nothing in sociology requires them to be. (In the same way, the claim that some sociologists are racists, even if true, would not warrant S. L. Washburn's view that "the sociobiological calculus is necessarily racist"). For it is quite possible to hold that genetic factors are among those affecting our behaviour, and that their effects are best isolated by assuming other things equal. But none of this prevents us from holding that other things are rarely if ever equal, that all kinds of other factors affect our behaviour, nor from holding whatever view we choose on the question of whether any of our behaviour is ultimately uncaused.

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Missing the message

By J. S. Bratton

ERROL DURBACK (Editor)
Beyond the Theatre: Essays in Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Ibsen's Birth
144 pp. Macmillan, £15.
0 233 28425 9

BERNARD F. DUKORE
Money and Politics in Ibsen, Shaw and Brecht
172 pp. University of Missouri Press.
0 8202 0284 2

The plays of Ibsen are one of the most fought-over battlegrounds in the dispute between the critics and the practitioners of theatre. It has always been so: the gap between "Ibsen" and "the Ibsenists", the social, political and theoretical interpretations of his plays, developed during the lifetime of his own lifetime and, indeed, intensified his work. It affected the plays of Macbeth, like Shaw, fundamentally. It is not only that Ibsen's plays can be said to contain some message which might be interpreted, or levels of meaning not necessarily patent to the audience in the theatre, but most drama can be seen to have larger meanings and any good writing repays close study. Rather, Ibsen has seemed to offer messages both

specific and symbolic which are separate from, even at odds with, the theatrical experience. Perhaps simply because there is, for most audiences, the necessity of one sort of translation of the text, it has always seemed natural to many to treat Ibsen as material for study rather than for direct experience, and therefore to place the plays at a remove. The conference convened at the University of British Columbia in 1978 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the dramatist's birth was aimed at overcoming this sense of distance by concentrating on the plays in the theatre. To this end it brought together academics and theatrical practitioners of several kinds.

The idea is interesting, and the experience, for the conference members, seems to have been exciting and perhaps even healthily disturbing. But the volume which has resulted from it does not reproduce that experience for the reader. It gives the impression of a collection of people talking against it in spite of each other, not only from different points of view, but without a common language and while some essays are interesting and valuable despite this, others are mere repetitions or extensions of edited positions already entrenched, even of actual material already well known.

The essays, which come nearest to realizing the object of the conference are

those by Torg-Silva Ewbank, Ever Sprinchorn and Janet Suzman. Ms Suzman, speaking from an uncomplicated position as an actress familiar with Ibsen from her working experience, offers a strong and particular interpretation of Hedda Gabler in which Hedda is seen as a frustrated, trapped but essentially courageous woman. The piece must command respect from both critics and practitioners, and is a refreshingly positive, if not very cerebral, first-hand account. Professors Ewbank and Sprinchorn needed no rapport with the other contributors in order to fulfil the aims of the conference, for they each combine themselves all the attributes of the complete Ibsenist. Scandinavian professors of English and Drama in a British and an American University respectively, they are also distinguished translators of Ibsen for the theatre. Sprinchorn offers an astute note on what he sees as the widespread culture of directors and actors to fulfil the demands of Ibsen's plays, which must have raised many hackles when it was delivered. Ewbank has a strong sense of the immediate theatrical dimension of the texts, derived perhaps from her recent work with the RSC and the National Theatre. Her essay tackles the central peculiarity of Ibsen that is the cause of the conference, our sense of his otherness and distance from us, making use of the widest range of critical tools. Her focus is on a discussion of language as

embodying the distance between Ibsen and English thought. These pieces can stand alone; the shortcomings of most of the remaining essays are rather shown up than made good by their juxtaposition with others in the collection. Frederick and Lisa-Lone Marker, for example, offer a survey of productions in the orthodox manner of old-fashioned theatre history; the critical crudity of this approach, its tendency to reduce all plays and all productions to a level odd to be content with simplistic judgments, is made obvious by the proximity to this volume of examples of advanced critical methodology such as James McFarlane's. But the Markers' meticulousness throws into relief the failure of Michael Meyer and Martin Esslin to take into account any of the achievements of the nineteenth-century British stage to their essays, which both make sweeping and often inaccurate assertions about Ibsen's dramatic innovation and unique importance according to Esslin, "It was Ibsen whose revolutionary impact and ultimate success showed that drama could be more than the trivial stimulant to maudlin sentimentality or shallow laughter which it had become — at least in the nineteenth century." He goes on to offer some genuine perceptions concerning Ibsen, in philosophical and psychological

terms, but little of what he says is not already available to earlier published works. John Northern's essay on *When We Dead Awaken* applies to a new example the highly individual and illuminating method of reading the plays which he evolved in his earlier studies. But little in the volume goes any further in breaking new ground, and as a whole its 144 pages will hardly tempt either scholar or playgoer to the expenditure of £15.

By contrast with this attempt at a fresh approach, Bernard F. Dukore's *Money and Politics in Ibsen, Shaw and Brecht* is an academic exercise of the most insouciant kind, treating the plays as if they were then already neatly bundled and ticketed according to a strict schema that has very little indeed to do with the stage. It states, and inexorably moves towards establishing, the thesis that all three of the dramatists considered were interested in radical issues, and treated money and politics in related ways. This is hardly a new insight, and Dukore's presentation of it, though exemplary in its orderliness, is unexciting and sometimes very ineffectual in its manner; there is this to be said for the 150th birthday celebration, that even if its excitement stemmed from mimicry and conflicting claims, it demonstrated that Ibsen's plays are worth fighting for, and cannot be quietly left to rest as part of an academic exercise.

John Northern

When Claudius came

By Keith Branigan

GRAHAM WEBSTER:

The Roman Invasion of Britain
224pp. Batsford. £8.95.
0 7134 1329 8

The Roman invasion of 43AD firmly established Britain as part of the Roman empire for almost 400 years, and some of the effects of that occupation are with us still. Britain, of course, was never remotely near the centre of the stage in the Roman world and by and large we learn little of events there from the Romans themselves. The exception was Tacitus, who by reason of having a father-in-law who spent three separate periods of military service here, wrote at length on certain episodes in the first fifty years of Roman rule. As fate would have it, however, the chapters of his *Annals* that will have described the Claudian invasion of 43AD and the years following were lost in antiquity. Apart from a short and probably somewhat inaccurate account by Dio Cassius and a few passing references by Suetonius, the story of the Roman invasion of Britain has therefore to be pieced together from archaeological evidence. It is not only fitting, but necessary, that a history of the Claudian invasion should be written by an archaeologist, and few British archaeologists have devoted so much of their time to the military history of Roman Britain as Graham Webster.

His book divides naturally into three parts: the preliminary expeditions, and references; a discussion of the pre-conquest situation in Britain and events leading to the invasion; and an attempt to reconstruct both the course of the invasion and the military dispositions which immediately followed it. Nothing further need be said here of the first of these sections, although the references in particular form an essential part of the book for the student of Roman Britain.

After a short discussion of the sources of evidence (to which Suetonius should have received some attention), Dr Webster gives a brief and somewhat dated outline of prehistoric Britain and the history of the Celts, before providing a summary of Caesar's account of his expeditions of 55 and 54BC. He rightly draws attention to

the political motivations for these expeditions, and to Caesar's strategic and logistic errors, from which he was largely saved by his tactical brilliance. Some of the more intractable problems in interpreting Caesar's account—such as the whereabouts of both the kingdom and stronghold of his main opponent, Cassivellaunus—are considered further in the following chapter, which attempts to make some sense of British tribal and dynastic history in the century between Caesar and Claudius. Just as for many years it was assumed that Cassivellaunus was king of the Catuvellauni, now it is assumed (equally without good reason) that he was not, and Webster follows the current trend.

Once out of the Caesarian epoch, British history until 43 is largely reconstructed from the evidence of the distribution patterns of inscribed British coinage. There are explanations other than political and historical ones for these distributions, but even if Webster is right in ignoring them, it makes the task of interpreting them no easier. The study of British coinage in Britain is at present both confused and confusing, and likely to remain so, and Webster's chapter reflects current uncertainties. One does not surmise at the end of it with a clear, let alone a convincing, historical sequence for this hundred-year period, but at least the distribution maps and the chart on page 42 present the basic data and one possible interpretation of them.

The most interesting of Webster's own contributions to the debate is the importance he attaches to the Roman intervention in British affairs during the reign of Augustus, and to the influence of the policies of Caracalla and Tiberius (the heirs of the great king Caligula) in the years before 43. While there are a few scraps of evidence which support the former postulate there is none to support the latter.

Webster next sets the scene for the invasion itself by sketching a portrait of the opposing forces. That for the British is too brief to be entirely satisfactory, for both Caesar and Tacitus have important commentaries on warfare amongst the Celts in general and as practised by the British in particular. He also exaggerates the role of warfare in Celtic society—"the tribes went to war every year as a matter of course". Once Webster moves over to his own side, the Romans, things are dif-

ferent and we get a concise and authoritative assessment of their army as an instrument of conquest and suppression. This is followed by an entertaining but also useful account of some of the most neglected figures in the story of the invasion—the commanders and other prominent Romans who accompanied Claudius himself on his all too brief participation in the conquest.

With the scene set and the principal characters introduced, Webster can at last turn to the main act—the invasion itself. So many accounts have been written of this—all based, of necessity, on the single short account by Dio Cassius—that it would be unfair and unrealistic to expect anything very new from this one. But Webster does manage to produce two new and valuable insights into particular episodes of the campaign. The first is a skilful and convincing re-creation of the Roman attack across the River Medway. The second is an astute summing-up of both the short-term effects and the long-term results of the enforced Roman halt at the Thames, to await the arrival of Claudius. Had the Roman forces been allowed to cross the Thames and march on Colchester immediately, the conquest of Wales and the west might have been achieved

within five years instead of thirty, and the shape of the province, with which the remainder of the book deals, might well have been very different.

As it was, the Romans established a frontier whose nature and location are still both very imperfectly understood, despite much research by Dr Webster and others. Similarly, the disposition of troops not only along but also within the first frontier is largely speculative in the present state of knowledge. In the fifty-five pages of Chapter Six, which form the real meat of this book, Webster offers his own theories as to what that disposition was. Arguing that one way of approaching the problem is to study the routes which the army would want to control, he identifies some thirty-eight of these and then predicts, on the basis of strategic and logistic considerations, the location of about one hundred and thirty forts. Recognizing that this is an ideal model and that, if only because Claudius's dispositions were dynamic rather than static, the actual and predicted dispositions will not always coincide, Webster provides a detailed résumé of the evidence for Roman military stations of the Claudian period within the new frontier. A series of excellent maps summarizes the results of his study, revealing that about a third of the pre-

dicted locations have not yet produced any evidence at all for a fort, while a fifth of the sites have been proven by excavation to be those of Claudian forts. Since the remaining fifty per cent of the sites include many (such as Ham Hill, Wykecombe, Droghda and Canterbury) where evidence of an early fort exists and a Claudian date makes most sense, there is clearly some substance to the scheme suggested by Webster's model. Further excavations will certainly confirm more of the sites presently labelled as possible and probable, but as Webster himself admits not all of the forts could have been occupied at once, and many of the predicted sites will not have been invaded by the army at any time for a variety of reasons.

Nevertheless, this is the first attempt to infer the dispositions from a theoretical model and it must be welcomed and seen as a qualified success. In addition, the chapter embodies much new and useful information for those who wish to pursue research further, and one can well imagine that Webster's maps, with the numerous "postulated" (or "no evidence") symbols will spur many keen part-timers into the field to hunt down their own local "missing" fort.

Life in Luristan

By Roger Moore

CLARE GOFF:

An Archaeologist in the Making
Six Seasons in Iran
284pp. Constable. £9.95.
0 09 643380 0

Good books describing what an archaeological expedition is really like in Britain or Europe, let alone more distant places, are still surprisingly rare, despite how popular a subject archaeology now is with publishers. Rarest of all are such books written by the director of an excavation, and no one has written before with the degree of informality and engaging honesty, not least about herself, that Clare Goff shows here.

Her professional colleagues have long known that she was a novice member of that honoured band of dauntless British women who over the past three centuries have penetrated the remotest corners of the Near East in quest of knowledge and adventure. Until now they did not know that she was also at one with many of those predecessors in her skill with the pen, nurturing an ability to write beguilingly not only of her research, but also of the landscape and of the people with and among whom she worked. Her book reads like an unusually lively set of letters to family and friends at home.

Even when Ms Goff is at her most irritated and frustrated, she shines through an indomitable spirit and a growing affection for the Lurs of Western Iran and their way of life. These, indeed, remain so strong a decade later as to leave a much more lasting impression on the reader than does her archaeological tome. It is the born traveller, sharp-eyed and ever curious, broadminded and courageous, resourceful and persistent, who wrote this book, rather than the archaeologist, though archaeology is the unifying theme.

In 1959, determined to escape the restraints of a privileged upbringing and a conventional university training as a historian, Ms Goff went to the Near East. At first she used her talents as a draughtsman on other people's excavations, while seeking an opportunity to conduct her own. This she found in Luristan, the mountainous central-western province of Iran. For half a century it has been renowned for the magnificent bronze objects plundered in profusion by the local tribesmen from its ancient graveyards. Torso-haphazardly from the ground and scattered worldwide by the antiquities market, the cultural context of these artifacts long remained obscure.

That it is no longer such a mystery owes

much to Ms Goff's six seasons of fieldwork from 1963-69, notably her excavations at Tepe Baba Jan in eastern Luristan. With skill and clarity she explains the archaeological problem, how she found a suitable site to dig, how and where she raised the money, the course of the excavation, and how she finally formulated her conclusions. Nothing is made too difficult for the general reader; but the great success of the book is the way it is all woven into an account of her daily life in Luristan.

It is clear that the author never spent herself, nor, one suspects, her companions, of whom she writes with unabashed directness. But she dismisses their criticisms by revealing so much of her own personality and attitudes, and by embracing their efforts in the undoubted success of the excavation. For them all the recurrent culture-shocks, the daily challenges, the temperamental clashes, the unworkable encounters with discomfort, disease and danger, were all recompensed by the elation of discovery and the small gestures which revealed hard-won acceptance by the local people.

Good, as Ms Goff's memory clearly is even without the support of the diary she occasionally quotes, the pace of the narrative is maintained by the anecdotes of talk, imaginatively reconstructed rather than literally reported which bring it all immediately before the reader's eye. At a time when the more that is known in the West of the realities of life in rural Iran the better, she has much to say that is of the greatest relevance, and she says it unobtrusively, rarely swayed by nostalgia. Anyone who has been on such a Near Eastern excavation will be constantly reminded of similar situations and feelings; those who have not may be assured that this is how it is—though sadly it may be doubted whether anything will ever be quite the same again for expatriate archaeologists in Iran.

The submerged sort

By Norman Hammond

KEITH MUCKELROY (Ed):

Archaeology Under Water
192pp. McGraw-Hill. £11.95.
0 07 043951 6

Keith Muckelroy's tragic death last summer while investigating a Scottish crannog deprived Britain of its leading exponent of underwater archaeology, all too soon after his appointment as "Archaeologist" of the National Maritime Museum. This excellent and attractive book, must serve (together with his book *Maritime Archaeology*) as his memorial, but it is also a fascinating guide to the techniques and procedures of underwater archaeology.

Muckelroy assembled an international group of specialists to cover shipwrecks as far afield as Western Australia and the Caribbean, as ancient as the Bronze Age, and as modern as the eighteenth century; he also managed to get all of them to write succinct two-page essays on their particular topics, although a single author may well contribute a linked sequence of these. The illustrations include clear maps, simple (sometimes too sketchy) site plans, and some remarkably good photographs. The editor's own introductory section on the problems and techniques of underwater archaeology is outstanding.

The book's subtitle declares it to be "an atlas of the world's submerged sites", and successive sections deal with the Mediterranean, where George Bass first set the standards and showed the potential of the field at Cape Gelidonya; northern Europe, including the famous Viking ships of Scandinavia; and the Armada, wrecks off the Irish coast; the Americans after Columbus

and the East Indies trade after Vasco da Gama; and finally drowned settlements and harbours overgrown by rising sea levels, and the lake-villages and crannogs that always sat in or beside the still water of European lakes in the prehistoric and later periods.

There is throughout an awareness, and a condemnation from many of the authors, of the depredations of treasure-hunters; but also the cheering news that some of the poachers have turned gamekeeper, and found more satisfaction in investigating underwater sites than stripping them. In this maritime archaeology has proved itself more adept than its terrestrial counterpart where the treasure-hunting looter is today far too familiar (and dangerous) a figure. Keith Muckelroy's final section on conservation and the public display and explanation of finds drives home the point that education breeds virtue. His book is likely to make a significant contribution to the format of least.

Universiteit van Amsterdam The IVEK (Interfaculty Department of Aesthetics and Philosophy of Culture) of the "Faculty of Philosophy" at the University of Amsterdam, has a vacancy for a full professor of aesthetics and philosophy of culture (m/f)

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Requirements:
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According to the policy of the Faculty to enlarge the number of women in the teaching staff, women who meet the requirements explicitly are invited to send in an application.

Further information can be obtained from the secretary of the nomination committee, Drs. A. van der Schoot, IVEK, Roetersstraat 15, 1018 WB Amsterdam, tel. 020-522.3052 or 020-94.84.29.

Detailed applications including curriculum vitae and list of publications may be sent within a month to: Secretaris van de Centrale Interfaculteit, Mr. J. K. Galama, Roetersstraat 15, 1018 WB Amsterdam, Netherlands, quoting number 4302. Persons who wish to submit the names of possible candidates (preferably with detailed information) are also requested to write to Mr. Van der Schoot.

REMINDER

Copy for advertisements in the TLS should arrive not later than 10.30 am Monday preceding the date of publication

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MARIE CORBETT on
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LIBRARIANS

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